MOURNING IN LATE IMPERIAL CHINA

The new Manchu rulers of Qing dynasty China (1644–1912), as the conquering regime, desperately needed to legitimize their rule. To win the approval of China's native elites, they developed an ambitious plan to return Confucianism to civil society. Filial piety, the core Confucian value, would once again be upheld by the state, and officials throughout the empire would observe the laborious and time-consuming mourning rituals that were the touchstone of a well-ordered Confucian society. In this way, the emperor would be following the ancient dictate that he "govern all under heaven with filial piety." Norman Kutcher's pioneering study of mourning in late Imperial China looks beneath the rhetoric to demonstrate how the state – unwilling to make the sacrifices that a genuine commitment to proper mourning demanded – quietly but forcefully undermined, rather than reinvigorated, the Confucian mourning system.

With acute sensitivity to language and its changing meanings, Kutcher sheds light on a wide variety of issues relevant to Chinese historians, including: the relationship between filial piety, the emperor, the state and the ruled; bureaucratic efficiency and reform; and the delicate balance of power between the Han and Manchu ethnic elites at the nexus of Chinese ritual and politics during the Qing Dynasty. This book will interest not only those concerned with late Imperial China, but anyone seeking to understand the role of ritual and filial piety in Chinese society.

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Mourning in Late Imperial China

Filial Piety and the State

Norman Kutcher

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521624398

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First published 1999
This digitally printed first paperback version 2006

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Kutcher, Norman Alan.

Mourning in late imperial China: filial piety and the state / Norman Kutcher.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in Chinese history, literature, and institutions)
Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-62439-8

1. Mourning customs – China. 2. Funeral rites and ceremonies – China. 3. Filial piety – China. 4. China – Social life and customs – 1644–1912. I. Title. II. Series.

GT3390.5.C6K87 1999
393'.9'0951–dc21 98-36386 CIP

ISBN-13 978-0-521-62439-8 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-62439-8 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-03018-2 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-03018-8 paperback

For my father
Max B. Kutcher
and to the memory of my mother
Gertrude Kutcher

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Acknowledgments

I wish to offer sincere thanks to the many institutions and individuals who have offered assistance. I am deeply indebted to my advisor Jonathan D. Spence for his constant encouragement during my six years at Yale and after. His wide-ranging knowledge and scholarly instincts, and his painstaking efforts in reading my work have been sources of inspiration. Beatrice S. Bartlett of Yale has made all the difference to the outcome of this book. From patiently introducing me to the mysteries of the Qing archives to carefully reading my chapters, her continuing intellectual guidance has forced me to keep reexamining my assumptions.

I would also like to thank teachers from my undergraduate days at Wesleyan, who out of generosity and commitment to the field have stayed with me on the journey. Clarence Walker encouraged me to pursue an academic career, despite abysmal job forecasts. Vera Schwarcz mentored a year-long research project that changed my life, and has remained a close friend. Irene Eber's suggestion that I study family rituals led me directly to this book, and for that, as well as for our years of nourishing correspondence, I am much indebted.

I owe great thanks to other teachers. Ying-shih and Monica Yü took me under their wings and taught me the importance and challenge of Classical Chinese. Mr. Yü's recent reading of this manuscript improved it immensely, and renewed my debt to him. I thank Peter and Ruth Gay; Kang-i Sun Chang, who showed me that poetry could be an important source for historians; Ch'en Jo-shui; Hugh Stimson; and Emily Honig, who helped immensely with Chapter 2.

From my 1988–89 research trip to the People's Republic of China, I thank Professor Wei Qingyuan of People's University, who served as my academic advisor. Since many of the ideas for this book were developed while I was in China, Professor Wei was the first to hear them. His sense that there was something to my findings provided a tremendous amount of encouragement. I also benefited immensely from participation in his graduate seminar,

"Ming-Qing History and Ming-Qing Archives," and would like to thank the other participants in that seminar, most particularly Li Chunming.

The staff of the Number One Historical Archives in Beijing was extremely helpful, and I would like to thank Liu Zhongying and Zhu Shiyuan in particular, for their efforts on my behalf. Yang Ruowei of Beijing University, and her husband, Zhang Bennan of People's University, became close friends and teachers who opened their home to me.

Colleagues in the field have been a source of encouragement and information. I would like to thank Carol Benedict, Jonathan Chaves, Pamela Kyle Crossley, Adrian Davis, Elise Devido, Patricia Ebrey, Valerie Hansen, James Hayes, Mary Lee McIsaac, Melissa Macauley, Susan Mann, Susan Naquin, Richard Smith, Ann Waltner, Wang Ai-ling, and Wu Chan-liang. Mark Elliott read portions of the manuscript and made valuable suggestions. He also persuaded me that Manchu names and terms should be rendered in the Möllendorf system, and cheerfully provided the romanizations. I thank Liu Xinyong and Unryu Suganuma, energetic Syracuse graduate students who found time to help with language difficulties. My thanks are also due to many in the field whose recent work bears on my own. Again and again as I researched this book new works were published that forced me to rethink and reexamine my approach. In this sense, I am indebted to the many scholars who make Ming and Qing studies so exciting.

The History Department at Syracuse University is a community open to the sharing of ideas, and I am indebted to my many colleagues who at various times have listened patiently to the ideas in this book and offered thoughtful suggestions.

At Cambridge University Press I found a group of caring individuals who helped immensely with the editing and production of this book. Many thanks to Mary Child, Elizabeth Neal, and Camilla Knapp. Deep thanks are due to Denis Twitchett, who edits the Cambridge Series on Chinese History, Literature and Institutions.

Family members and others who have been more than like family deserve my deepest thanks for their love and support. I would like to thank Max B. Kutcher, Richard Wallach, Lynne Schwartz, Judith Feldman, Helmut Walser Smith, and Mark Saba.

A variety of generous sources provided financial support for this project. I offer sincere thanks to the Mellon Fellowships in the Humanities program. For his immense enthusiasm and legendary attention to the development of each Fellow, I would like to thank former program director, Robert F. Goheen. Other generous financial support during my graduate years came in the form of a Yale University Fellowship. My year in China was funded by a grant from the Committee for Scholarly Communication with China. That organization

provided essential aid in ways that went beyond the financial, not the least of which was helping during the tragic events of June 1989.

The National Endowment for the Humanities provided financial support for a second trip to China. I also owe thanks to Syracuse University for the various forms of aid it has provided this project, and for granting me the leave time I needed to complete it.

In this litany of thanks one individual deserves special recognition. My mother, to whom this book is dedicated, started me on life's journey, nurtured me even as I wrote this book, but then died during the year in which I was completing revisions. In a situation of terrible irony, I found myself writing a book on mourning while coming to terms with the loss of someone who was both mother and best friend. I had thought that witnessing the courageous way in which my mother fought her illness, and the serenity with which she at last accepted the inevitability of her death, would be her last gifts to me. But in my months of mourning I came to understand that the gifts bequeathed to us by the deceased continue long after they are gone.

A note on conventions

Except where indicated, references to emperors use their reign titles, the appellations by which they are best known. Manchu names are also given in Chinese to make them easier to locate in Chinese reference works.

The citation format was selected to facilitate the work of subsequent researchers. Citations to archival sources contain all information required to call up the documents at the Number One Historical Archives. These include the name of the document and author, date, and then in parentheses the fond (*quanzong* 全宗), category (*leibie* 類別), and packet or document number (*wenjian hao* 文件號). The locations and call numbers are provided, where applicable, for rare books. For essays of varying lengths the collectanea or series within which the work was published, and other specifics of publication, where available, are included. References to the Chinese classics are from the popular series of critical editions *jinzhu jinyi* published by the Commercial Press and the Three Principles Press, both of Taiwan.

Chinese words and names are rendered in the *pinyin* system of romanization, except in the case of writers who spell their names in Wade-Giles, for whom that system is used.

Reigns of Ming and Qing emperors

Reign Title	Temple Name	
	(Ming Dynasty – 1368–1644)	
Hongwu	Taizu	1368–1399
Jianwen	Huidi	1399–1402
Yongle	Chengzu	1403–1424
Hongxi	Renzong	1425
Xuande	Xuanzong	1426–1436
Zhengtong	Yingzong	1436–1450
Jingtai	Daizong	1450–1457
Tianshun	Yingzong	1457–1465 (resumed government)
Chenghua	Xianzong	1465–1488
Hongzhi	Xiaozong	1488–1506
Zhengde	Wuzong	1506–1522
Jiajing	Shizong	1522–1567
Longqing	Muzong	1567–1573
Wanli	Shenzong	1573–1620
Taichang	Guangzong	1620
Tianqi	Xizong	1621–1627
Chongzhen	Sizong	1628–1644
Hongguang	Anzong	1644–1645
Longwu	Shaozong	1646
Yongli		1646–1662
	(Qing Dynasty – 1644–1911)	
Shunzhi	Shizu	1644–1661
	(Dorgon Regency 1644–1650)	
Kangxi	Shengzu	1662–1722
	(Oboi Regency 1662–1669)	
Yongzheng	Shizong	1723–1735
Qianlong	Gaozong	1736–1795
Jiaqing	Renzong	1796–1820

Daoguang	Xuanzong	1821–1850
Xianfeng	Wenzong	1851–1861
Tongzhi	Muzong	1862–1874
Guangxu	Dezong	1875–1907
Xuantong		1909–1911

Introduction

This book documents a sizable shift in state policy carried out during three successive Qing reigns, those of emperors Kangxi (r. 1662–1722), Yongzheng (r. 1723–35), and Qianlong (r. 1736–95). During this period, the state decisively relaxed its commitment to a core value of Chinese civilization: the careful observance of prescribed mourning for the deceased. The time-consuming practices associated with mourning a parent had long been an impediment to bureaucratic efficiency, requiring an official to leave office for a period of more than two years. But less stringent mourning policies could not be overtly or easily implemented: change was facilitated by the popular support for a relaxation of the rites that pervaded elite circles in the last part of the sixteenth century. This book therefore begins not with the changing state policies of the Qing, but with the reorientations in elite culture of the preceding Ming dynasty that made new policies acceptable. Change in this study is thus traced to the dynamic interaction between state policy and elite (and "intellectual") culture.

This shift was dramatic. Mourning had long been considered inviolable because it was the paramount expression of filial piety (*xiao* 孝), the devotion of young to old that was the cornerstone of Chinese civilization. Confucius himself, the great fifth-century B.C.E. Chinese philosopher, solidified the connection between proper observance of mourning and filial piety. To be filial was "to serve parents according to the rites when they are alive, bury them according to the rites when they die, and sacrifice to them according to the rites thereafter."[1]

In the Han dynasty (202 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), as Patricia Ebrey has noted, filial piety "came to be exalted," and "mourning austerities became the most widely used measure of filial piety."[2] The trend continued in the period following the

1 *Lun yu xin yi* 論語新譯, in *Si shu duben* 四書讀本 (Taibei: Sanmin Shuju ed., 1966, 1986), 61.

2 Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China: A Social History of Writing about Rites* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 31, 32. Evelyn Rawski, moreover, notes that filial piety "was from the time of Confucius identified with the observance of mourning." Evelyn S. Rawski, "A Historian's Approach to Chinese Death Ritual," in James

fall of the Han. In those chaotic times, according to Fujikawa Masakazu, the promotion of proper mourning became a fixation of heads of both family and state, who saw in it a means of reestablishing their influence.[3] Subsequent dynasties came to adopt, with some variations, strict observance of mourning requirements. Officials whose parents died were required to leave office and return to their homes for mourning. There they were to observe a strict regimen of self-denial, all the while performing rituals for their deceased parent.

Upholding the virtues of filial piety became a major responsibility of government. In Confucian political philosophy, the state was required to encourage the filial piety of its officials by ensuring they mourned their parents properly. By so doing, it could reap an important benefit: Filial devotion of officials for their parents would be transformed into loyalty to the ruler. The result would be a society described in a popular formulation first set forth in the Han: "The Emperor rules all-under-heaven with filial piety." It would also be a society that was in accordance with *li* 禮, a term that when used as a noun means ritual and propriety, but which can also be used as an adjective, in which case it means proper, or ritually correct.

To my knowledge, there was no specific term Chinese people used to describe the worldview by which loyalty to the state emanated from devotion of young to old. Accordingly, I have coined the term "parallel conception of society" to serve as an etic description of it. This doctrine allowed the state to harness, rather than compete with, the familial bond by stating that the various devotions of people within the state to each other were parallel bonds of mutual obligation. Rather than feeling a conflict of interest between serving parent and ruler, the filial son who was a minister could view his obligations as essentially parallel.[4]

In Confucian discourse, the parallel conception of society by its nature ran counter to hierarchical and authoritarian models of societal organization. In the parallel society the emperor's power over a minister came not from coercion, but from encouraging his ministers to be filial to their own parents. In the same way, a local official obtained the obedience of the common people by encouraging their devotion to their parents – which he taught them by his devotion to his own parents.

The parallel conception of society was an elite formulation. Certainly most

Watson and Evelyn Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 26.

3 Fujikawa Masakazu 藤川正數, *Gi Shin jidai ni okeru sōfuku rei no kenkyū* 魏晉時代における喪服禮の研究 (Tokyo: Keibunsha, 1960), 6–7. During the Wei dynasty (220–64), authorities even gave special tax-exempt status to families that were dedicated to proper observance of mourning rituals. Ibid., 21.

4 This conception of Chinese society as based on parallel notions of obligation is encapsulated in the modern Chinese term for state, *guojia* 國家, which means literally "state-family."

peasants did not think of themselves as locked in a network of parallel loyalties that bound family and state. And even within elite writings, particularly those that were not written in the course of official business, there persisted a competing notion that filial devotion to one's parents could conflict with one's obligations to the emperor. This conflict over divided loyalties was debated intensely beginning in the second century, and by the sixth most commentators agreed that ultimately one's higher duties were to one's parents.

Hierarchical and authoritarian models, too, persisted in opposition to the parallel conception. These were evident in sumptuary restrictions on the funeral, which limited the extravagances one could lavish on the deceased according to one's place in society. Death itself was in some senses hierarchical – a different verb for "to die" was used for different members of society.[5]

In Confucian discourse, however, and most particularly in official writings, the parallel conception of society dominated, and was ubiquitous in elite discussions of filial piety and mourning. Although there was no explicit Chinese term for this doctrine, no official could memorialize the throne in terms that contradicted the parallel nature of his devotion to parents and emperor. Discussions of the parallel conception of society in the context of how parents should be mourned pervaded both the Confucian canon and state-sponsored publications, an emphasis that continued through the late dynastic period of Chinese history.[6] During this time significant emphasis remained on funeral and mourning rituals, as the important indicia of filial piety.[7]

How seriously did those in the state really take the parallel conception of society? Did the answer to this question change over time? Filial piety has previously been taken too much for granted for these issues to be addressed. Certainly historians around the world have acknowledged – frequently in very

5 For example, for emperors and empresses the verb was *beng* 崩, for princes *hong* 薨, and for scholars *culuo* 殂落. In this sense death might be said to "disclose a status," as Roland Barthes noticed for descriptions of death in Tacitus. Roland Barthes, "Tacitus and the Funerary Baroque," in *A Barthes Reader*, ed. Susan Sontag (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 163.

6 The *Record of Rites* (*Li ji* 禮記), the *Rituals of Zhou* (*Zhou li* 周禮), and the *Decorum Rituals* (*Yi li* 儀禮) all deal substantially with funeral rituals, and do so within the context of the parallel conception of society. As Zhang Xigong 張錫恭 noted in his preface to the works of Zheng Xuan 鄭玄, the first-century philosopher on the rites, "The methods by which Heaven's ways are taught, and the methods by which exemplary people practice virtue, are all mentioned in the Six Classics [that is, the *Odes*, *Book of History*, *Record of Rites*, *Book of Music*, *Book of Changes*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* of Confucius]. These six classics all return to one starting point, and that is the rituals. And ritual in turn has five classics devoted to it, all of which deal primarily with death and mourning." *Sangfu Zhengshi xue* 喪服鄭氏學, 16卷 (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe ed., 1984), pref.1a.

7 For example, the *Collected Institutions* (*Huidian* 會典), which were compendia of governmental regulations and precedents, contained large sections on mourning and death ritual. These detailed the way in which those throughout the society should be mourned, from emperor to commoner.

strong terms – the role of filial piety in China.[8] Yet there has been curiously little sustained analysis of it. This is particularly true of the issue of the state's responsibility to further filial values, a subject that has remained largely untouched.

Among Westerners, those who were products of the nineteenth century, and of the Christian missionary movement that arose during it, saw something of the power of filial piety, though they described it in disapproving tones. W. E. Soothill referred to it as "the cord of four hundred million strands which binds the nation, the clan, and the family together," and discussed whether the cord should be cut to make way for Christianity.[9] Arthur H. Smith, in his widely circulated *Chinese Characteristics*, regaled his readers with tales of filial extremes, all the while implying that most Chinese observed them. Filial sons were depicted as languishing in the mourning sheds they built near their parents' graves, selling their land to "the last fraction of an acre" to pay for lavish funerals.[10] All of this was meant to reinforce nineteenth-century notions of the superiority of Western culture, and provide entertaining images of China's distinctiveness.

Twentieth-century Westerners of a reform-minded bent also criticized what they took to be the wasteful excesses of filial piety. John Lossing Buck, for example, noted that almost two percent of China's arable land – which was in critically short supply – was taken up by gravesites.[11] Jack Belden was only the first of many writers sympathetic to the Communist cause in China who saw filial piety as responsible for many of China's ills. Filial piety, he said, had made China death-centered.[12]

In taking mourning for granted, historians have often likewise assumed that it was somehow not concerned with the emotions of loss. Our view of officials has largely focused on their lives as bureaucrats; they appear as career-oriented individuals who cared most about maintaining their official positions. This has led to the essentially unexamined assumption that the mourning period was nothing more than a hollow ideal to which those at the top of the society paid lip service.

To John King Fairbank, mourning for parents was a custom that "interrupted an official's rise to power." To Arthur Waley, it was a kind of "'sabbati-

8 The prominent Japanese Sinologist Kuwabara Jitsuzo declared filial piety to be "at the very center of Chinese civilization" and responsible for "the preservation of the nation, the tranquility of the society, and the harmony of the family." Kuwabara Jitsuzo 桑原騭藏, *Chūgoku no kōdō* 中國の孝道 (reprint ed., University of Michigan Library, n.p., 1977), 5. Kang Xuewei refers to filial piety simply as "the basis of Chinese civilization." Kang Xuewei 康學偉, *Xian Qin xiaodao yanjiu* 先秦孝道研究 (Taibei: Wenjin Chubanshe, 1991), 1.

9 W. E. Soothill, *The Three Religions of China*, Lectures delivered at Oxford, 3d ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), 182.

10 Arthur H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1894), 180.

11 Thomas R. Tregear, *A Geography of China* (London: University of London Press, 1965), 109.

12 Jack Belden, *China Shakes the World* (New York: Harper, 1949), 136.

cal' occurring as a rule toward the middle of a man's official career" that "gave him a period for study and reflection."[13] Neither scholar wrote about mourning in terms of the prescribed observances for the deceased, or the state's responsibility to further filial piety by ensuring mourning was carefully observed, or indeed as providing a means of confronting the traumatic loss of a parent.

While recognizing the importance of career aspirations in the lives of officials, this study also emphasizes that officials struggled to balance official demands with their own emotional needs, and with the demands of their families. Officials were also sons, who experienced one of life's greatest losses: the death of a parent.

Against a backdrop of the traumatic loss of a parent, this study shows the ways in which the demands of official life changed in late imperial China. New policies toward mourning evidenced a subtle but perceptible shift in the nature of loyalty that was demanded of officials. By the end of the eighteenth century, mourning for parents, insofar as the state was concerned, was no longer a powerful force that held the society together, but was instead a largely private matter affecting only individuals. As the following chapters suggest, these developments indicate a changing aspect to the emperor–official relationship, from one modeled on parallel loyalty to one based on absolute loyalty.

A note on sources and their use

The surviving bureaucratic communications from China's last dynasty are available largely in the Number One Historical Archives in Beijing. Estimated to house more than ten million documents, the Number One's collection has revolutionized the study of Qing bureaucratic history. Archival sources make it possible to penetrate the more public rhetoric of published sources, and expose the day-to-day ways in which mourning mattered.

Because very few archival documents are available from the Ming, a variety of other sources is used to round out the picture of mourning presented here. These include "jottings" (*biji* 筆記), which were privately published notes and observations not intended for wide circulation, as well as poems, local gazetteers, and essays. These are supplemented with the standard sources of bureaucratic history.

Given the nature of the documentary evidence, I have had to use what I term the principle of acceptable discourse to interpret it. Officials had different levels and kinds of freedom to express themselves in different sorts of documents. A memorial to the throne, a poem, an entry in a local history, a jotting

13 John King Fairbank, *The United States and China*, 4th ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 113.

for narrow circulation – all these required different forms and permitted different degrees of authorial liberty. The notion of acceptable discourse is simply shorthand for taking cognizance of those different levels of freedom.[14]

Acceptable discourse is particularly relevant to the study of filial piety in China. To be filial was by its nature to be traditional, to observe principles that were unchanging.[15] When changes were evident in official documents, they were not heralded as such: language was carefully used to conceal change. When official leaves were shortened in the early eighteenth century, for example, officials of the Board of Personnel used the term *bensang* 奔喪 to refer to the shortened period. The term originally referred to the actions of a filial son, shocked and grief-stricken, who hastily left his post to begin his twenty-seven months of mourning. The term as it was revived bore little resemblance to the original meaning, but it lent an air of tradition to what was in essence a new practice.

Acceptable discourse also dictated the language one could use to discuss the delicate subject of death. As James Watson has noted, both the corpse and the rites associated with it were considered to have polluting effects on the living.[16] The effects of this pollution were evident in official discourse, which demanded euphemism be used when describing the details of death and mourning.[17] This use of euphemism was just as much a practice in the funerals of emperors as in those of others in society. Thus, emperors were buried in "camphor palaces (*zigong* 梓宮)," and imperial funerals were "services of peace (*feng'an* 奉安)." Euphemism suffused even the words bureaucrats used to arrange their trips home for funerals and mourning. To mourn was to "arrange grief (*dingyou* 丁憂)" or "observe regulations (*shouzhi* 守制)." Mourning clothes were called "filial clothes (*xiao fu* 孝服)," which could be shortened to either "filial" or "clothes." Regulations for mourning were referred to simply as "clothing

14 Readers familiar with the work of Michel Foucault will note that this term suggests a debt to him, which I acknowledge. Of course, as Foucault himself cautions, and as I hope the following pages demonstrate, the world should not be seen as simplistically divided between "accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one." Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. I: *An Introduction*, Robert Hurley, trans. (New York: Vintage, 1978, 1980), 100.

15 See Memorial of Zhang Yunsui 張允隨, August 19, 1748 (2禮儀硃批4).

16 James L. Watson, "Of Flesh and Bones: The Management of Death Pollution in Cantonese Society," in Maurice Block and Jonathan Parry, eds., *Death and the Regeneration of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 155–86. See also his "Funeral Specialists in Cantonese Society: Pollution, Performance, and Social Hierarchy," in Watson and Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, 109–34.

17 In official writings death pollution is not spoken of by name, though its presence is so conspicuously felt that its acceptance (and validity) seems to have been taken for granted. For example, in the *Complete Qing Rituals* (*Da Qing tong li* 大清通禮), the regulations for those in mourning specify that "those observing the three year period of mourning . . . do not enter [official] buildings or have connections with happy occasions." Lai Bao et al. 來保, *Da Qing tong li* 大清通禮, 54卷 (1824), 52.9b.

regulations (*fuzhi* 服制)." Changes in euphemisms over time reveal much about changing sensibilities.[18]

Because language was so important to the changes discussed here, I have chosen to emphasize close readings of individual cases, and episodes that illustrate the changes that took place. Extensive quotations from the documents afford a glimpse into the ways in which language functioned. All languages are in a sense straitjackets for meaning and expression: bureaucratic Chinese certainly no less so. Despite this, I hope the quotations I have chosen to translate will allow some Ming and Qing individuals to speak for themselves.

In imperial communications, what constituted acceptable discourse arose in part from the fact that the system was emperor-centered. Memorials were addressed to the throne, and edicts were worded as though personally written by the emperor. Recent works by Beatrice Bartlett and Philip Kuhn have revealed the complexity that underlay the acceptable discourse of bureaucratic communications, and the deliberative process that resulted in the composition of edicts.[19] Their work, and that of others in the field, has deepened our understanding of how the imperial bureaucracy functioned. Therefore, the phrase "the emperor ordered" in an edict cannot lead us to draw conclusions about what was transpiring in the emperor's mind.[20] Summarizing the trend of recent scholarship, Pamela Crossley has noted that our vastly improved understanding of emperorship has resulted in scholarship that is able to "break the emperorship down into its subsystems, each to be examined for its cultural, political and social content."[21]

The study of filial piety in the bureaucratic context has much to add to the discussions of emperorship currently under way. The filial piety of the parallel conception of society had the effect of constructing a personal bond between official and emperor. The regulation of filial piety and mourning was a duty personally incumbent upon the emperor. Not all emperors discussed in this study took their responsibility in regulating mourning to heart at all times, but the principle remained recognized.

While the principle of the parallel conception of society remained traditional and unaltered, reinforcing the personal relationship between emperor and

18 Some Han euphemisms were unique. Second-degree mourning (*da gong* 大功) and third-degree mourning (*xiao gong* 小功) were referred to respectively as Greater Red (*da hong* 大紅) and Lesser Red (*xiao hong* 小紅). The color red was then, and since, used to combat death pollution.

19 Beatrice S. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch'ing [Qing] China, 1723–1820* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

20 See Norman Kutcher, "The Death of the Xiaoxian Empress: Bureaucratic Betrayals and the Crises of Eighteenth-Century Chinese Rule," *Journal of Asian Studies* 56, no. 3 (August 1997):708–25.

21 Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Review Article: The Rulerships of China," *American Historical Review* 97, no. 5 (December 1992): 1469.

official, the bureaucracy itself changed mightily. Paperwork that was manageable in the earliest Qing reigns grew dramatically through the eighteenth century. The Qianlong Emperor could not begin to exercise the personal control over the empire that his father, Yongzheng, and grandfather Kangxi had. The discourse of the system remained emperor-centered, but the emperor himself seemed to grow ever smaller.

The language used in this book reflects these circumstances. When my analysis of the documents leads me to believe that a particular document written in the imperial first person reflected the emperor's personal views and influence, that document is referred to as if he had written it himself. Otherwise it is referred to in the passive voice.

To face the complexity of the bureaucracy in the Qianlong reign, the last chapter of this work is devoted to a scandal that occurred in 1748. This scandal, in which many officials violated national mourning for Qianlong's deceased wife, reveals not only a great deal about Qianlong himself but also about the state of the parallel conception of society by the middle of the eighteenth century. Akin to what Philip Kuhn has called a "political crime," it was an occasion in which Qianlong reasserted himself against the ever-growing bureaucracy, and the mountain of paper that was its fortress.[22]

Overview

Although the plan of this book is largely chronological, Chapter 1 is devoted to the features of filial piety and mourning that were constants. This chapter is primarily for the benefit of the general reader; the specialist may wish to begin with Chapter 2. Chapter 1 briefly describes geomantic and extravagant practices, both of which were ubiquitous in the Ming and Qing. It also discusses the practice of *duoqing* 奪情, the cutting short or suspension of an official's mourning for a parent. Changing attitudes toward *duoqing* are discussed through the remainder of the book. The chapter concludes with reflections on the psychology of losing a parent for a Ming or Qing official.

Some of the precedents set in the early Ming would remain influential through the end of the dynasty. Chapter 2 opens with a brief discussion of these, and traces the evolution of mourning practices and policy across the Ming. Hongwu, the first Ming emperor, was a strong advocate of the parallel conception of society, and strictly prohibited *duoqing*. He also changed some mourning practices to make them conform to his sense of which emotions were natural. There were others in the state, however, who were deeply concerned

22 Philip A. Kuhn, "Political Crime and Bureaucratic Monarchy: A Chinese Case of 1768," *Late Imperial China* 8, no. 1 (June 1987): 85. The queue-clipping case is more fully documented in *Soulstealers*.

with filial piety. This is discussed via the "Twenty-four cases of filial piety" that became popular throughout much of South China, and through reference to local gazetteers from the sixteenth century.

By the late Ming, extant practices still reflected some of Hongwu's precedents. *Duoqing* remained rare, and instances in which officials failed to leave office and mourn their parents caused outrage in and out of the bureaucracy. Moreover, the trend toward changing mourning practices to accommodate popularly held notions of natural emotions became well established. Although ritual texts had presented ritual as guiding and forming the emotions, many late Ming elites came to believe that rituals should instead merely reflect emotion, and changed them accordingly.

The Manchu conquest of China in 1644 was culturally complex, and mourning rituals were integral to that complexity. Set against the background of the Manchu conquest, Chapter 3 discusses the relationship between Han and Manchu elites. Amidst the trauma of the dynastic transition, mourning became a way for Han people to remain faithful to their collective Ming pasts. The Kangxi Emperor responded with an appealing gesture: overt embrace of the parallel conception of society. In reality, though, the system he established did not adhere to that conception. Amounting to a privatization of grief, Kangxi's system of mourning grew instead from culturally Manchu conceptions of rule and from the late Ming notion that rituals should reflect, and not form, the emotions. Kangxi revealed his new stance on filial piety in the mourning he observed for his beloved grandmother, Xiaozhuang. He revealed it also in the quiet way in which he suspended mourning leaves for members of his upper echelon of officials. Rather than openly terming what he was doing *duoqing*, he referred to it as ordering his ministers to "observe mourning at their posts."

Kangxi's position on mourning and filial piety became embedded in bureaucratic policy. Beginning with changes made during Kangxi's own reign, and continuing with those made in the reigns of his son Yongzheng and grandson Qianlong, Chapter 4 observes the relationship between bureaucratic language and bureaucratic change. Mourning, an essentially Han institution, was first greeted with suspicion by the Manchu conquerors, whose early rules added greatly to the verification procedures for mourning. During the Kangxi period, the rhetoric remained largely traditional, but mourning was different than it was under the Ming. Using the rhetoric of frugality, Yongzheng was able to further the subtle undermining of the parallel conception of society. Qianlong made some attempts to shore up filial piety, and even went so far as to agree to an end to observing mourning at the post. But these were mere gestures, and the system continued.

The death of Qianlong's first wife and his declaration of a period of state mourning in her honor are the precipitating events of Chapter 5. Consistent with his undermining of the parallel conception of society, Kangxi had put an

end to the practice of state mourning for an empress. Qianlong sought to revive the practice because of his special feelings for his wife. His expectation that all China would share in his grief over the loss of the "mother of the state" was in essence a yearning for the parallel conception of society. The scandal that erupted when official violation of national mourning was found to be widespread is thus an appropriate topic with which to conclude. It reveals the great extent to which the parallel conception of society had become, by the middle of the Qing dynasty, a doctrine honored in rhetoric only.

1

Death and the state in imperial China: continuities

As early as the Shang dynasty (traditionally dated 1766–1122 B.C.E.), ancestors in China were believed to control people's destinies, and had to be consulted through divination on the course of action their descendants should follow. Elders both living and dead demanded the obedience of their juniors in an inexorable system that encompassed a full range of religious and social meanings.[1]

For those who sought to rule China by something more than coercion, the challenge was to create an ideology of rule that, at the very least, did not conflict with the loyalties owed to kin. Such an ideology was vital because no group could hope to rule China without the help of a network of loyal officials who would carry out orders, and faithfully report on developments in the hinterlands.

Confucianism's answer to that challenge was an ideology that sought to harmonize service to the family with service to the state: the "parallel conception of society" referred to in the Introduction.[2] Society, as Confucianists depicted it, was held together by parallel bonds of mutual obligation. In their

1 See generally David N. Keightley, *Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978). On the centrality of ancestors see Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China: A Social History of Writing about Rites* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 15–16.

2 My use of the term is etic, but the conception of society, heretofore unnamed, has been noticed by many. See Evelyn S. Rawski "The Imperial Way of Death: Ming and Ch'ing [Qing] Emperors and Death Ritual," in Watson and Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 231; Kuwabara Jitsuzo 桑原騭藏, *Chūgoku no kōdō* 中國の孝道 (reprint ed., University of Michigan Library, n.p., 1977); Julia Ching, *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study* (New York: Kodansha International, 1977), 98–99; Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 415; Kang Xuewei 康學偉, *Xian Qin xiaodao yanjiu* 先秦孝道研究 (Taibei: Wenjin Chubanshe, 1991), 13–16; Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958, 1964, 1965), II.61–62; Max Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, Hans W. Gerth, trans. (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 158, 305; Huang Pei, *Autocracy at Work: A Study of the Yung-cheng [Yongzheng] Period, 1723–1735* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 196.

view, instead of an emperor's demanding that officials be more loyal to him than to their parents, the relationship of emperor to minister was parallel to that of father to son. It was precisely, Confucianists argued, because individuals were filial sons that they could be loyal officials. These loyal officials, in turn, could serve as role models for the common people.[3]

Confucius had warned that he was a transmitter, not an innovator, and accordingly the Confucian parallel conception of society did not develop out of nothing. Shades of it appeared in various forms in early texts. According to Wang Guowei, references to ruling and filial piety can be traced back to oracle bones.[4] Perhaps the earliest definite expression of it is in the *Classic of Changes* (*Yi jing* 易經), which depicts cosmogeny as a progression of parallel dualities beginning with heaven and earth, and proceeding to husband and wife, father and son, and ruler and minister.[5]

The parallel conception of society provides a schema of how society is held together. The *Great Learning* (*Da xue* 大學), a Confucian classic made part of the "Four Books" – the primary texts of Confucianism – in the Han dynasty, presents the parallel conception of society as social schema.[6] That work depicts a society governed by filial piety, in which the family's internal hierarchical relationships applied to society as a whole. In the text of the *Great Learning* this parallel conception was manifested in two ways. First, the ruler was to set his domain in order through the regulation of himself and his own family. Second, the state as a whole was taken as a kind of model of the family, with the ruler

3 According to a wide range of early sources, officials and rulers by proper observance of filial piety were to serve as exemplars for the common people. See *Shang shu biao zhu* 尚書表注 (Taibei: Guoli Zhongyang Tushuguan ed., 1991), 1.25 et seq.; Hong Liangji 洪亮吉, *Chun qiu zuo zhuan gu* 春秋左傳詁, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1987), 1.387–88. The principle is also recognized in Mencius, see *Mengzi xinyi* 孟子新譯, in *Si shu duben* 四書讀本 (Taibei: Sanmin Shuju ed., 1966, 1986), 330–31. As an imperial edict promulgated in 1539 began, "Great families can, by proper respect of the *li*, encourage such conduct among the common people." Zha Jizo 查繼佐, *Zui wei lu* 罪惟錄, 36卷 (Zhejiang: Guji Chubanshe, 1986), 7.689.

4 Wang Guowei 王國維, *Guantang jilin* 觀堂集林 24卷 (Huaining Wang Jing'an Xiansheng yishu ed.), *juan* 9. Wang notes that on the oracle bones the character *xiong* 兄 should be read as *xiao* 孝.

5 "There was heaven and earth and then there were the 10,000 things, there were the 10,000 things and then there was male and female. There was male and female and then there was husband and wife. There was husband and wife and then there was father and son, there was father and son and then there was ruler and minister, there was ruler and minister and then there was an above and a below. There was an above and a below and then there was ritual and its requirements." Nan Huaijin 南懷瑾 (ed.), *Zhou yi jinzhu jinyi* 周易今註今譯 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1974), 437.

6 The *Great Learning* is one of the sections of the *Book of Rites* (*Li ji* 禮記). The parallel conception as social schema appears also in the *Book of Documents* (*Shu jing* 書經), as the *Analects* note. "Someone asked Confucius: 'Master, why have you never taken part in government?' Confucius responded: 'The *Book of Documents* says: "To be filial is to fulfill the duties of brotherly love." These qualities are also apparent in good government. Why then must one take part in government?'" *Lun yu xin yi*, 67. Thus, for Confucius, to be filial to one's parents was per force to be engaged in government.

as "parent of the people."[7] In the classic statement of the ruler's role the parallel conception of society was given its clearest formulation.

> If [the ruler] cannot instruct his own family, he will not be able to instruct others. Therefore, the ruler may perfect his instruction of the state without going beyond his own family. Through filial piety (*xiao* 孝) the ruler is served. Through fraternal obedience (*ti* 弟) superiors are served. Through benevolence (*ci* 慈) the common people are served.[8]

This was the same social order depicted by Han Feizi, who wrote, "The official serves the ruler, the son serves his father, the wife serves her husband. If these three are done then all under heaven is ordered; if these three are not done then all under heaven is in chaos."[9]

In more general terms, the notion that filial piety itself ordered society pervaded the Confucian canon. In some texts this was described as filial piety becoming, or as being the essence of, the loyalty (*zhong* 忠) of an official for the emperor.[10] In other writings, filial piety was simply described as the basis of the society.[11] Both of these conceptions were referred to by a frequently quoted phrase, "The Emperor rules all-under-heaven with filial piety."[12]

In the *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiao jing* 孝經), made a canonical Confucian text in 838 C.E., the parallel conception of society is taken as an expression of a developmental truth: that sons who were taught to be good to their parents would mature into officials who would be loyal to the emperor.[13] That is, the inculcation of good values and of obedience toward parents would transfer to the sovereign.[14] The well known Neo-Confucian thinker Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺

7 *Da xue xin yi* 大學新譯, in *Si shu duben* 四書讀本 (Taibei: Sanmin Shuju ed., 1966, 1986), 12.

8 *Da xue xin yi*, 10. When Duke Jing 景 of the state of Qi 齊 asked Confucius about good government, the sage replied in a similarly famous formulation: "The ruler must be a ruler, and the minister a minister, the father a father, and the son and son." *Lun yu xin yi*, 162.

9 Tang Jingzhao 湯敬昭 and Li Shian 李仕安 (eds.), *Han Feizi xiao zhu* 韓非子校注 (Nanjing: Jiangsu Renmin Chubanshe ed., 1982), 702.

10 "The father's filial son is the ruler's loyal official." *Zhan Guo ce* 戰國策, 趙策, cited in Kuwabara Jitsuzo, 22. "The loyal official in service of his ruler; the filial son in service of his parent, these are the same." *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 774.

11 "One serves the ruler with filial piety." *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 837. As another early text put it, "the ruling of the state must start with the roots and move to the branches. The root is filial piety." Lin Pinshi 林品石 (ed.), *Lü Shi chun qiu jinzhu jinyi* 呂氏春秋今注今譯 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1985), 14.361.

12 The *locus classicus* of this phrase is the *Xiao jing*, which states: "In former times, the enlightened kings used filial piety to govern all-under-heaven." *Xiao jing jinzhu jinyi*, 14. It was frequently quoted in memorials. See Memorials of Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀, July 14, 1741 (內政 禮儀硃批7); Maiju 邁柱, n.d. (2例行題本758); Shen Tingfang 深廷芳, July 13, 1746 (內政 禮儀硃批12).

13 "The gentleman's service of his parents with filial piety produces a loyalty that can be transferred to the ruler." *Xiao jing jinzhu jinyi*, 25.

14 This is the view attributed to Confucius in the *Classic of Filial Piety*: "The Master said: One who loves one's parents will not dare to hate others; one who respects one's parents does not dare to spurn others. When love and respect are fulfilled in service of one's parents, then virtue is taught to the common people, and the Emperor can serve as a model for the world. This is the

(1357–1402) noted that this way of thinking about the parallel conception of society was expressed in the old maxim that "one should seek the loyal official at the filial home."[15]

Death was intimately related to the parallel conception of society. Since earliest times, the death of a parent entailed a complex and demanding regimen of rituals. Because death rituals were such an important part of service to one's parents, a state that sought to harness the familial bond dared not interfere with the extensive rituals necessitated by a parent's death. In fact, the state that adhered to the parallel conception of society would have to encourage its officials to bury and mourn their parents with utmost devotion. Several early sources made clear that a proper funeral was a way of teaching filial piety.[16] Confucius himself seemed convinced of this; in the *Analects* the issue of mourning and the funeral is raised no less than nineteen times.

As elites in the Han dynasty (202 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) embraced Confucianism, they refined the parallel conception of society and worked out the details of its implementation. Emperors showed their respect for filial piety through their performance of the ritual of serving the elderly (*yang lao zhi li* 養老之禮).[17] Filial piety was ostensibly such an important virtue in the Han that all emperors but two had the character *xiao* in their temple names (*miao hao* 廟號).

In the Han, proper mourning became closely associated with filial piety, and was embedded in bureaucratic practice. The "five degrees of mourning (*wufu*

filial piety of the Son of Heaven." *Xiao jing jinzhu jinyi*, 4. More succinctly, the text states: "For teaching the people to love and respect [the ruler] nothing is better than filial piety 教民親愛, 莫善於孝." Ibid., 23. It is also the view Confucius presents in the *Analects*. "Master Ji Kang 季康子 asked: 'How can the common people be exhorted to respect and loyalty?' Confucius replied: 'Approach them with dignity, and they will be respectful. Be filial, and they will be loyal. Uphold the good and teach those who are unable, and they will be exhorted.'" *Lun yu xin yi*, 66.

15 See Ji Xiuzhu 姬秀珠, *Ming chu daru Fang Xiaoru yanjiu* 明初大儒方孝孺研究 (Taibei: Wenshizhe Chubanshe, 1991), 18. Fang wrote, "The Way of heaven is within us, in our heart's benevolence. The great way of benevolence (*ren* 仁) begins with serving our parents. When we serve our parents by caring for them, we value prudence and integrity (*jinjie* 謹節). If we are prudent we will be without worry; if we act with integrity we will be without deficiency." "Jinjietang ming 謹節堂銘," in *Xunzhizhai ji* 遜志齋集, 卷 7. *Sibu beiyao*, vol. 273 (Shanghai: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1936).

The earliest reference to this maxim is in *Xiao jing wei* 孝經緯. See biography of Wei Biao 韋彪, *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, in *Ershiwu shi* 二十五史 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe ed., 1994), 56.126.

16 See Kang Xuewei 康學偉, *Xian Qin xiaodao yanjiu* 先秦孝道研究 (Taibei: Wenjin Chubanshe, 1991), 151.

17 The practice began in the Later Han, with the reign of Ming Di 明帝 (58–75 C.E.). See Wang Yinglin 王應麟, *Yu hai* 玉海, 200卷 (Zhejiang Shuju ed.), 卷74. The practice was very important in the Tang. See "Huangdi yanglao yu taixue 皇帝養老於太學," in *Da Tang kai yuan li* 大唐開元禮150卷 (Siku Quanshu Zhenben ed., vols 99–108), 104.4b–7a. In the Qing, Emperors Kangxi and Qianlong put on special banquets for the aged called *qiansou yan* 千叟宴. Wang Zhonglin 汪鍾霖, *Jiu Tong fenlei zongzuan* 九通分類總纂, 240卷 (Taibei: Yiwen Yinshugan ed., 1974), 87.3521–22.

五服)," a system by which progressively distant relations were mourned for progressively shorter periods (with different attire prescribed for each grade), became an established part of official discourse.[18] During the reign of An Di 安帝 (107–125 C.E.), very high level officials and provincial governors were ordered to observe three-year mourning for their parents.[19] The practice was applied to the rest of officialdom in 157 C.E.[20] There was a great deal of flexibility for lower-level officials, in particular, who were encouraged to leave office to mourn relatives beyond the first and second degrees: grandparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings.[21]

In the realm of Han thought, the influential philosopher Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179?–104? B.C.E.) added cosmological and metaphysical elements to the parallel conception of society. He wrote that the essential feature of the existence of all things was the duality of *yin* 陰 (the feminine or receptive force) and *yang* 陽 (the masculine or creative force). From this duality flowed what he termed the "three bonds (*san gang* 三綱)," the three most important relationships in society: ruler–subject, father–son, husband–wife. These three parallel, vertical bonds had at the termini of each line the *yin* and *yang*, and thus were the same in their essential natures. "Thus the relationships between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, are all derived from the principles of the *yin* and *yang*. The ruler is *yang*, the subject *yin*; the father is *yang*, the son *yin*; the husband is *yang*, the wife *yin*."[22] In evolving Confucian political philosophy these parallel lines were thus connected with the nature of the cosmos.

Filial piety and mourning survived, and even grew more important, following the breakup of the Han dynasty. Part of the reason for this was that in those years, scholars asserted Confucian values to bolster their own authority, and to combat the threat posed to the empire by barbarians from without and eunuchs from within. At the same time, Fujikawa Masakazu notes, the end of the Han brought a new level of autonomy to scholars, who were freer to develop the details of Confucian ideology. During the Wei (220–264) and Jin (265–420) dynasties, scholars used their new freedoms to define the details of mourning rites. It was during this period, for example, that competing schools argued over exactly how long mourning should last. The longest mourning period was generally referred to as "the three-year period of mourning (*san nian sang* 三年喪)" – a convention adopted in this book. But it had long been understood that

18 Reference to the five degrees of mourning appears first in the *Record of Rites*. *Liji jinzhu jinyi*, 18.605.

19 The order applied to Two-thousand Bushel officials and provincial governors. *Hou Han shu*, 5.22.

20 *Hou Han shu*, 7.27.

21 Yang Shuda 楊樹達, *Handai hunsang lisu kao* 漢代婚喪禮俗考 (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1933), 259–63.

22 Quoted in Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II: *The Period of Classical Learning*, Derk Bodde, trans. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953, 1973), 42–43.

this phrase meant not a full three-year period, but one that lasted *into* the third year. The school of Wang Su 王肅 argued for a twenty-five-month mourning period, while the school of Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (whose position largely emerged victorious) argued for twenty-seven months.[23] In seeking to reform the rites, these schools also struggled to balance the demands of mourning with the requirements of bureaucratic efficiency, a process begun during the Han.

Part of the agenda of Wei and Jin scholars was seeking the reasons for the fall of the Han. Confucianists blamed the decadence of the late Han, and the corruption and inattention to the proper rites that accompanied it. They also wondered whether Han accomodations to bureaucratic efficiency had made the state stray from the Confucian way. Early in the Han, for example, it was determined that full state mourning for an emperor was impractical, so it should be reduced to three days.[24] Competing schools of thought in the Wei and Jin argued over whether this practice was proper. In effect, they argued over exactly how parallel the parallel conception of society should be. In a parallel society, officials would mourn the emperor for the same period a son would mourn his father, and with hemp mourning garb. This was the position taken by followers of Zheng Xuan. In contrast, followers of Wang Su argued for a shorter mourning period, and for no hemp mourning clothes.[25]

In defending their positions, schools of thought in the Wei and Jin looked primarily to textual exegesis for authority.[26] But they also looked to the issue of what practice would better conform to natural emotions. When, for example, Jin scholars Yuan Zhun 袁準 and Yu Weizhi 庾蔚之 disagreed on the length of the mourning period for a mother's sisters versus her brothers, the latter argued from the standpoint of natural emotions – who it was natural to feel closer to.[27] And scholars were aware that changing social conditions might necessitate changing ritual practice.[28]

The new independence of scholars in the Wei and Jin, and the concurrent increased power of the family system, produced a significant challenge to the parallel conception of society. For while scholars of that time emphasized the

23 See Fujikawa Masakazu 藤川正數, *Gi Shin jidai ni okeru sōfuku rei no kenkyū* 魏晉時代における喪服禮の研究 (Tokyo: Keibunsha, 1960), 126–28; Kang Xuewei, 104. Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, "San nian zhi sang 三年之喪," in *Ri zhi lu* 日知錄, Wanyou Wenku ed. (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1928), 2.914.

24 *Han Shu* 漢書, in *Ershiwu shi* 二十五史 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe ed.), 4.16.

25 Fujikawa, 143. On the related practice of exchanging months for days (*yi ri yi yue* 以日易月), i.e., mourning for twenty-five or twenty-seven days instead of months, see ibid., 178–80.

26 In choosing, for example, to debate the instances in which those in mourning could exchange days for months, thereby shortening the mourning period, Wang Su and Zheng Xuan appealed to different passages in *Sangfu Zhuan* 喪服傳. Fujikawa, 179.

27 Fujikawa, 212–13.

28 See arguments between followers of Zheng Xuan and Wang Su over whether a remarried mother should be mourned regardless of whether her children accompanied her to her new home. Fujikawa, 166–67.

importance of filial piety, they were far from unanimous in agreeing that loyalty to the emperor was an outgrowth of filial devotions. Many instead focused on the question of what happened when duties to the family came into conflict with duties to the state.

As Tang Changru has noted, the question was not a new one, and had been asked at least since the late Han.[29] After the fall of the Han, Cao Pi 曹丕, heir apparent to the throne of Wei, posed the dilemma to his assembled worthies with a hypothetical example in which father and ruler were both deathly ill, and there was medicine enough for one only. Even the fact that the heir apparent himself was asking the question did not keep many scholars – and one well-known one in particular – from opting to save their father. By the end of the Jin, the consensus seemed to be that when a conflict arose, "family took precedence over ruler, and filiality took precedence over loyalty."[30]

These scholarly discussions remained relevant throughout the dynastic period of Chinese history, at least in part because the issues they dealt with were timeless. The role of text and tradition on mourning would be balanced against the demands of changing social conditions and the emotions that accompanied them.[31] The following chapters show how Ming and Qing scholars revisited these issues, sometimes but not always with the cognizance that they had arisen before.

In general, though, subsequent dynasties clung fast to some variation of the parallel conception of society, and were careful to encourage observance of filial piety and mourning. Accounts in dynastic histories reverently recorded the acts of those who went to extremes in service of their living or deceased parents. Local officials submitted accounts to the throne of men and women who made heroic sacrifices for living and dead parents. Some of these actions were rewarded by the state with imperial recognition that brought renown to local areas.[32] The ruling family, for its part, was obliged to observe the dictates

29 Tang Changru 唐長孺, "Wei Jin Nan Chao de jun fu xianhou lun 魏晉南朝的君父先後論," in *Wei Jin Nan Bei Chao shilun shiyi* 魏晉南北朝史論拾遺 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1983), 236. The matter was, in the late Han and after, more than a matter for scholarly debates. When, for example, the official Zhao Bao 趙苞 sought to recapture the city of Liaoxi 遼西, the rebels brought his mother out onto the city wall to deter him. He and his mother spoke briefly, and agreed that loyalty should take precedence over filiality. He recaptured the city, and his mother and wife were killed. Though the emperor awarded him a title of nobility, in the end he could not bear what he had done, and vomited blood and died. Ibid., 236. *Hou Han shu*, 卷 81. Tang notes that despite the importance of filial piety in the Han, when forced to choose between filial piety and loyalty, Han people chose loyalty.

30 Tang, 230.

31 In the Tang, for example, Empress Wu's changes to mourning were implicitly criticized by scholars through references to the old debates between the schools of Wang Su and Zheng Xuan. Liu Xu, *Jiu Tang shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1975), 27.1023.

32 The sources abound with accounts of filial piety. See, for example, *Qing shi gao* 清史稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1977), 13747–48. A famous case of wandering in search of a parent's remains was recorded early in the Ming dynasty. Wang Shen 王紳's father was a Ming official

of filial piety, and the dynastic histories contain accounts of evil imperial relatives and emperors who nonetheless felt obliged to observe the dictates of filial piety.[33] Filial devotion became the dominant discourse among elites, who ostensibly agreed that it provided the basis for social organization.

In Confucian discourse, the death of a parent was seldom portrayed as a natural process or as a welcome relief from suffering, or even as an inevitable part of life: these outlooks on life and death were provided by Buddhism and Daoism – philosophies more or less quietly patronized by emperors and widely accepted, but not considered orthodox.[34] In the Confucian paradigm, it was the very extremity of death that demanded the extremities of filial devotion on the part of the bereaved.

Early Confucian texts warned plainly that the observance of death rituals and mourning should not result in harm to the living. The *Classic of Filial Piety* noted that after three days following the death of a parent the filial son could cease fasting, and in the third year following the death he could cease the mourning rituals. "By so doing he teaches the people that the dead should not harm the living . . . and that mourning must have an end."[35]

Despite warnings that the performance of death rituals should not harm the living, no display of filial piety was generally considered extreme, no extent of grief considered unhealthy. The term "ruining emaciation (*huiji* 毀瘠)" highlights the contradiction. The term referred specifically to the illness associated

who had been sent in 1373 by the Hongwu Emperor as an envoy to a Yunnan chieftain known as the Liang Wang 梁王. Wang's father died the following year, and his son traveled to Yunnan and spent the next fifteen years in search of his father's remains. For Wang's account of his journey, see "Diannan tongku ji 滇南慟哭記," *Jizhizhai ji* 纂志齋集12卷 (Siku quanshu zhenben ed. #4, vol. 312), 7.29b–33b.

33 Emperor Jingzong 敬宗 of the Tang is a good example of the latter. He was well known for neglecting government and caring only for personal amusement. *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, in *Ershiwu shi* 二十五史 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe ed., 1994), 17.69. When an official dared to criticize this neglect, the emperor had him thrown into prison, where he was tortured by having his teeth extracted. When the emperor learned, however, that the man's mother was in her eighties and worried sick over her son, he had the man released. *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1956) 唐紀59, 寶歷 1 nian (826). There are other examples. In the Southern Song, Emperor Guangzong 光宗 (r. 1190–94) was deficient in performing the ritual of *dingxing* 定省 (the morning and evening inquiry into the health of one's parents). For this he was criticized by officials and commoners. Therefore the prime minister, Zhao Ruyu 趙汝愚, arranged for Guangzong to dwell in seclusion, as a way of allaying people's concerns. See *Song shi* 宋史, in *Ershiwu shi* 二十五史 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe ed., 1994), 392.1354.

34 David McMullen's findings for the Tang dynasty apply equally well to other dynasties. State patronage of the Confucian *li* coincided comfortably with the diverse private beliefs of many scholar-officials. See David McMullen, *State and Scholars in T'ang [Tang] China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 259.

As Kuwabara Jitsuzo notes, filial piety was such a powerful force in the society that even Buddhist and Daoist monks were forced to observe it. Kuwabara, 132–33. The Daoist Zhuangzi subscribed to the parallel conception of society. But he noted that in addition to parallel obligations the individual had a duty to himself. Chuang Tzu [Zhuangzi], *Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 59–60.

35 *Xiao jing jinzhu jinyi*, 30.

with mourning a parent, in which the bones began to protrude on the bereaved's face. In the *Record of Rites*, where the term first appears, it is viewed disapprovingly, as a sign of excessive mourning.[36] But by the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) the sickness was recognized as a badge of filial piety, and even death from grief received special recognition.[37]

For all the demands of filial piety, the orthodox system as such promised no specific rewards to the faithful bereaved. There was no direct promise that deceased parents would reward their faithful offspring, or that badly buried parents would exact vengeance on their children. Notions such as these acknowledged competing loci of authority, and were therefore dangerous.[38] Instead, official writings averred that improper mourning was a hallmark of a decadent society, and could result, as it had in the past, in the loss of the Mandate of Heaven (*tianming* 天命).[39] The Spring and Autumn period, for example, was looked back on as a time when there was no filial piety and therefore no loyalty.[40] In such a climate, it was natural that Heaven's mandate should not extend. The notion of decadence, and failure to mourn as a sign of decadence, remained influential throughout the dynastic period. In addition, accusations of avoiding mourning responsibilities, whether true or false, could be powerful weapons in politics.[41]

36 *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 39.

37 *Ming shi* 明史 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed.,), 7232, 7268. For other instances, see ibid., 7287, 7289; in the last instance the individual received imperial commendation.

38 It was not that such notions were absent from the society, quite to the contrary. Local officials frequently paid for the interment of paupers out of the fear that they would become wandering ghosts who would terrorize the local populace. See Emily Ahern, *The Cult of the Dead in a Chinese Village* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1973), 241–44; David K. Jordan, *Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors: The Folk Religion of a Taiwanese Village* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), 33–36. Susan Naquin notes that because of this fear the Qing state maintained altars to untended spirits; she also notes that there were graveyards maintained at public expense in north China. Susan Naquin, "Funerals in North China: Uniformity and Variation," in Watson and Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 47–48. According to the *Collected Ming Institutions*, local officials were to offer a sacrifice known as the *li* 厲 three times a year. It was particularly for the benefit of those who had no descendants to offer sacrifices to them, and for those who had died in inauspicious ways. See *Da Ming huidian* 大明會典 228卷 (Taibei: Dongnan Shubao ed., 1963), 卷94. These actions were kept local, however.

39 The Mandate of Heaven is a core concept in Confucian discourse. Hints of it appear in the *Book of Changes* (*Yi jing* 易經), though it is usually attributed to Mencius. Gai Kuanrao 蓋寬饒, who lived during the reign of Xuan Di 宣帝 (r. 74–49 B.C.E.) in the Han, cited the *Book of Changes* as the source of the Mandate of Heaven. See Denis Twitchett and John King Fairbank, general editors, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. I: *The Ch'in [Qin] and Han Empires*, Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 773. The idea appears in several places in *Mencius*, but is perhaps most clearly stated when Mencius advises: "Those who follow Heaven are preserved; those who rebel against Heaven perish." *Mengzi xinyi*, 366.

40 Kang Xuewei, 122–24.

41 When the notorious Grand Secretary Yan Song 嚴嵩 (1480–1565) was in power, his family members were often accused of debauchery. When Yan Song's wife died, the emperor decreed

When society fell into decadence, those to whom filial piety still mattered were left surviving and mourning as best they could. For those in disorderly times who sought to adhere to the norms of filial piety, proper mourning might provide a refuge. Officials in the late Ming, for example, sometimes observed mourning meticulously. Hong Wenheng 洪文衡 (*jinshi* 1589) was such an official. Faced with an emperor who held virtue in low esteem, Hong turned to extreme filiality. In mourning his parents he subsisted on rice only for a period of three years, and abstained from sexual relations for the same period.[42]

Heterodoxy and acceptable discourse

Because filial piety was both an important norm and a sign that the Mandate was remaining with the current dynasty, there was immense pressure to remain faithful to that norm in one's rhetoric. Those who were in the service of the state were loath to admit that they were anything other than filial sons who observed parallel obligations to state and family.

Yet underneath the pronouncements of those in the state there was a wealth of heterodox beliefs, the number and influence of which might genuinely have dwarfed orthodox practices.[43] Despite the pressure to mourn in a purely Confucian way, death in China, as elsewhere, called forth such a wealth of complex emotions that no one tradition could accommodate all the bereaved's needs. Death practices were a rich tapestry, woven of Confucian and popular religious beliefs, the traditions of specific local areas, and even of practices specific to families and clans.[44] Part of this richness was reflected in

that since Yan was already so old, his grandson Yan Gu 嚴鵠 should be entrusted with transporting the body to the family home in Fenyi 分宜, Jiangxi. Stories circulated by Yan Song's enemies claimed Yan Gu used this as an opportunity to cavort with his lewd followers. They danced and drank wildly along the route, molesting women and terrorizing the local populace. Yan Gu was even accused of extorting money from local officials by threatening to abandon his grandmother's corpse in their jurisdictions. *Ming shi*, 5570. For a more favorable evaluation of Yan Song and his son Yan Shifan 嚴世蕃, see L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, eds., *A Dictionary of Ming Biography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 1586–91.

42 *Ming shi*, 6286.

43 Many of these were evident in, and can be traced back to, the Han dynasty. They show also the unusual ways in which orthodox and heterodox practices could be merged. For example, it was common, as death approached, to move the dying person to the center of the floor, as orthodox texts demanded. But then people would invoke the popular deity Yuan She 原涉. *Han shu* 漢書, in *Ershiwu shi* 二十五史 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe ed., 1994), 92.344. In another example of such syncretism, Yang Wangsun 楊王孫 buried his enemy with a jade object in his mouth, as ritual demanded, but he also buried him naked (*luozang* 裸葬), to make certain to prolong his shame. Ibid., 67.269.

44 Often, clan rules supplemented or elucidated aspects of the mourning canon. For example, the genealogy of the Gan 甘 family contains family regulations by a sixth-generation descendant. These regulations, dated 1686, related primarily to graves. The genealogy contains subsequent emendations to the rules, necessitated by changing state policies. *Shenyang Gan shi zongpu* 瀋陽甘氏宗譜, 1804 (Columbia University Microfilm EcF 758), 附例.1b. Family rules of the Zou

the diversity of the funeral itself. Buddhist and Daoist clergy might be hired to perform services. Local funeral specialists might be called in to perform rituals, handle the corpse, and supply mourning garments. Prognosticators would determine both an auspicious time for the burial and an auspicious grave site.[45]

Because of the pressure to maintain filial Confucian discourse, much of the richness of death and funeral practices remains inaccessible to the historian. Literacy was almost exclusively the province of those who were under the most pressure to keep their discourse filial: the elites, who sought success in the examination system and whose fates were consequently tied to the success of the reigning dynasty. Unfilial practices were performed but largely not recorded. Moreover, modern local practices are not reliable indicators, except in the most general of ways, of what practices were performed in the past.[46]

Part of the dividing line between respectable, filial practices and unacceptable and inexpressible practices may be described as what was written versus what was unwritten: a textual versus an oral tradition. Mourning had a textual, Confucian side that was recorded in official pronouncements from the throne, ritual texts like Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals*, and ancient ritual texts. But it also had an oral tradition – local practices that varied considerably from place to place that were not recorded. This paralleled the very nature of Chinese language itself; its written language was part of a national discourse shared everywhere, whereas its local languages were dialectal and highly idiosyncratic.

A textual versus oral dichotomy, however, is itself insufficient to describe the range of what could or could not be written about death. Although there were written and unwritten traditions, there was tremendous variation in what was permitted even within different types of texts themselves. People could write with different extents of freedom in different types of texts. An official had

鄒 family advised that those mourning in the slightest degree (*tan wen* 袒免; also known as *sima* 緦麻) need wear mourning clothes for seven days only, not the three months traditionally prescribed. But, the rules continue, mourning must again be worn on the day of the funeral. *Zou shi zong pu* 鄒氏宗譜, 1915 (Columbia Univ. Microfilm Ecf 773), 1.2b. On clan rules in general, see Hui-chen Wang Liu, *The Traditional Chinese Clan Rules*, Monographs of the Association for Asian Studies, no. 7 (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1959).

45 So rich were death rituals with differing and at times conflicting beliefs and practices, that it is probably incorrect to speak even about "Buddhist practices" or "Daoist practices" at the funeral. Instead, there was an intensely rich culture of death, in which elements of doctrinal and popular beliefs were interwoven. The collective mass of these traditions at times greatly overshadowed the Confucian elements that alone received official sanction.

46 As Xu Fuquan's superb study of mourning rituals on Taiwan reveals, even the practices in this "traditional" society have changed substantially over time. Xu Fuquan 徐福全, *Taiwan minjian chuantong xiaofu zhidu yanjiu* 臺灣民間傳統孝服制度研究 (Taibei: Wenshizhe Chubanshe, 1989), 724. Xu notes that changes in law, economics, urbanization, education, ideology, family, architecture, and transportation have all resulted in gradual changes in mourning rituals over time, and especially since the early Qing. See 768, passim.

much more freedom in a collection of his jottings, privately printed and for limited circulation, than he did in a memorial to the throne.[47] This was probably true for most things he chose to write about. And yet with the whole gamut of emotions and ideas surrounding death, and the intense pressures to maintain filiality and filial discourse, officials felt far greater pressures when they wrote about death than about most other matters.

Two unorthodox practices, geomancy (*fengshui* 風水) and extravagant funerals, were perennial enough concerns of the state for them to be introduced here. Both were as un-Confucian as they were ubiquitous. And both resulted in delayed burial of the deceased, which was in direct conflict with Confucian values.[48]

In dynastic China, many people believed that an auspicious grave site for one's parents could bring prosperity to the family. But despite widespread belief in geomancy, it was not a subject that was often addressed in official writings, except when bureaucrats felt obliged to condemn it. Yet, even the grave site of the emperor was chosen by a geomancer.[49]

In some regions of China, geomantic practices amounted to more than just simple prognostications about when and where to bury. Particularly in the far south: in Guangdong, Fujian, and southern Jiangxi, geomantic practices were the alter egos of Confucian notions of filial piety. In these areas, powerful popular beliefs held that corpses should be dug up and reburied after three years in the ground.[50] As the anthropologist Maurice Freedman remarked, "By geomancy, then, men use their ancestors as media for the attainment of

47 Zhu Guozhen, the author of the well-known jottings *Yongchuang xiaopin*, had achieved the highest level of the official examinations, the *jinshi* 進士, in 1589. Yet despite his education and position he maintained in his writings a strong belief in the occult. In *Yongchuang xiaopin* he records that in 1513 a high official in the Board of Rites died while in the South. His son went and had him encoffined and returned to the North, where he placed his coffin in temporary burial inside the walls of a well. When months later the son opened the temporary grave, he discovered that there was beautiful engraving on the coffin. Artisans traveled to see it, and proclaimed it had to be the work of spirits, because the carving was unlike any done at the time. Officials came to examine and inspect the wood; they drilled into it and carved it, but could find no explanation for the strange and beautiful carvings. Finally the coffin was moved to the family tomb. Zhu Guozhen 朱國禎, *Yongchuang xiaopin* 湧幢小品, 1621 32卷 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1959), 4.96–97.

48 On the problem of delayed burial see Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, "Ting sang 停喪," in *Ri zhi lu* 日知錄, Wanyou Wenku ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1928), 6.16.

49 Memorial of Wang Baolu 旺保祿, March 13, 1773 (內政 禮儀硃批12). Officials in charge of the imperial grave sites were responsible for performing periodic recheckings of the geomancy of imperial tombs. See memorial of Yongcang 永常, May 29, 1737 (2禮儀硃批3).

50 For an example of professed literati disdain for geomantic practices, see Liu Qingli 劉青藜, "Di shi 地師", *Qing shi duo* 清詩鐸 (Beijing, Zhonghua Shuju, 1960, 1983), 842. This poem narrates geomantic beliefs near Bei Mang Mountain 北邙山, Henan. The poem's author contrasts the site's historic significance – as a burial ground for nobles in the Han – with its contemporary state as a coveted burial area.

worldly desires. And in so doing they have ceased to worship them and begun to use them as things."[51]

In his well-known jottings, Xie Zhaozhe, son of a minor official and resident of Changle 長樂, Fujian, describes vast construction projects undertaken in the cause of improving the geomancy of parents' graves. Xie is remarkably honest in his portrayal of the obsession with geomancy around him.

> People being deluded by geomancy runs deep in Fujian. The people have hundreds of plans for finding an end for their bodies. If they do not succeed in these they have geomancers to mislead them, and the final burial is avoided. There are also wealthy families who obtain land that is basically good, but who are afraid that it has defects going beyond whether or not it is attractive. They pound the earth into mountains. They open fields and turn them into slopes with the construction of retaining walls. In order to lead the water they build bridges and they pound the earth into large platforms. In doing so they spend more than ten thousand strings of cash. The construction is completely like a person whose ears and nose have a small defect, and so carving and plastering is used to correct them. And of what use can causing all this confusion be? And what of the toilers who [to complete these projects] work in inaccessible places? They are never able to seek after fortune and come to quick calamity.[52]

For the wealthiest people vast construction projects might be carried out to change the land and improve its geomancy. But the poorest had to bury their parents as best they could, with little choice of land and without aid of a geomancer. Thus it was a system of thought in which the rich got richer and the poor got poorer.

How extravagant funerals became status symbols in China is something of a mystery. But they are so deeply rooted in Chinese culture that even after decades of anti-superstition campaigns they have started to resurface in the People's Republic.[53] Though the topic of how much to spend on a funeral was debated in the time of Mozi and Mencius, with many since inveighing against sumptuous funerals, these lavish send-offs have, for whatever reason, remained immovable fixtures on the Chinese landscape.[54]

There were many costly aspects to a funeral. Burial ground was expensive, and if a geomancer was hired, there were his fees as well as the higher price of

51 Maurice Freedman, "Ancestor Worship: Two Facets of the Chinese Case," in *Social Organization: Essays Presented to Raymond Firth*, Maurice Freedman, ed. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1967), 88. Freedman confirms that geomantic practices were most extensive in Fujian.

52 Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛, *Wu za zu* 吾雜組, 16卷 (Beiji Xiaoshuo Daguan ed.), 6.3628.

53 "Funeral Customs Experience Change," *Beijing Review* 28, no. 13 (April 1, 1985): 9–10. Although by 1978 the state had achieved cremation rates above 37 percent in areas with crematoria, by 1983 that percentage had fallen to 29. Ibid., 9.

54 As Susan Naquin has noted, "The lavishness of a funeral did more, of course, than reflect the sentiments of a child for a parent; it reflected the aspirations of a family for higher social status." Naquin, 49. Mencius argued that a lavish funeral was a natural expression of the love of child for parent.

a plot with good geomantic properties. And there was the price of the coffin. Wood was scarce, and in general the highest quality woods were favored, especially those like camphorwood (*Catalpa kaempferi*, *zi* 梓) that would retard parasites. And the corpse was usually dressed in many layers of shrouds; some of these would be received as gifts but many would be purchased by the family. Then there were fees for those who performed the tasks of the funeral: from those who washed and dressed the corpse, through the clergy who chanted sutras and charms, to the gravediggers.

Truly sumptuous funerals, however, would have many more expenses. There would be an elaborate feast, complete with entertainers of various kinds, including troupes of actors and musicians.[55] The procession, in which the deceased was carried to his or her grave, presented a conspicuous opportunity for extravagance. Although what was customary to include in the procession varied according to time and place, there were frequently horses, carriages, pennants, and parasols. These might be borrowed, rented, or purchased.

The practice of burying or burning items for the use of the dead, known as *xunzang* 殉葬, was directly related to the practice of the same name in which the living were buried with the dead – a custom at times still practiced by the ruling houses in the Ming and Qing.[56] Besides popular beliefs about the ability of the soul to use such items, these were occasions for the displays of opulence. In 1727, the Yongzheng Emperor complained that many wasted their money purchasing gold and silver and burying them with the deceased – an action he called fuddled and stupid. But as for suits of clothes, replicas of valuable items carefully crafted, or the items themselves, he said, when these were conspicuously displayed they lent grandeur and opulence to the funeral.[57]

Geomancy and extravagance were largely not part of acceptable discourse in the Ming and Qing. Literati, for example, did not mention these practices in otherwise detailed accounts of their relatives' funerals. And discussions of imperial funerals did not mention the entertainers present, the feast, or the items buried with the deceased. To admit to geomantic practices was to

55 Complaints about these practices stretch back to the Han dynasty. See Huan Kuan 桓寬, *Yantie lun* 鹽鐵論 (Changchun: Jilin Wenshi Chubanshe ed., 1995), 259–95; Wei Wei 魏微, *Qunshu zhiyao* 群書治要50卷 (Congshu Jicheng Chubian ed.), 政論.

On the performance of Mulian operas at funerals see Kenneth Dean, "Lei Yu-sheng [Lei Yousheng] ('Thunder Is Noisy') and Mu-lien [Mulian] Funerary Traditions of Fukien [Fujian]," in David Johnson, ed., *Ritual Opera, Operatic Ritual, Mu-lien [Mulian] Rescues His Mother in Chinese Popular Culture* (Berkeley, CA: Publications of the Chinese Popular Culture Project, 1989), 46–104.

56 On its prohibition during the Ming see *Ming shi*, 142 (Palace concubines not permitted to follow the Zhengtong 正統 Emperor in death); Yu Ruji 俞汝楫, *Libu zhigao* 禮部志稿, 1620 (Siku Quanshu ed., vols. 597–598), 597.77 (The Chenghua 成化 Emperor prohibits wife of an imperial prince from following her husband in death). On Qing prohibitions see Wang Shizhen 王士禛, *Chibei outan* 池北偶談36卷, 1.23b (Censor Zhu Pei's 朱裴 memorial advising an end to *xunzang* approved by the Shunzhi 順治 Emperor).

57 Cited in Feng Erkang 馮爾康, *Yongzheng zhuan* 雍正傳 (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1985), 368.

acknowledge that there was a locus of supernatural power outside the state. To confess to having put on an extravagant funeral was to risk imitating the features of a decadent society.

Duoqing: the limits of state involvement

The state's commitment to the parallel conception of society notwithstanding, there were limits to its ability and willingness to inquire into the practices of officials' everyday lives. Thus, from the standpoint of the state, some features of mourning became more marked than others. In practice, when it came to the mourning observed by its officials, the state cared most about officials leaving their posts and returning to their home areas. What they did there was largely their own business, so long as they brought the corpse of their loved one to a peaceful burial (*an zang* 安葬).

Because of the intense pressure to ensure an official's return to his home for the mourning period, it was early decreed that only in certain circumstances would it be possible for him to *duoqing* 奪情 (lit., "cut short the emotions"), or return to his post before the expiration of the mourning period.[58] According to well-accepted custom, an official could *duoqing* only if he was a military official and it was a time of national emergency.[59] Only in this narrowly defined set of circumstances could mourning be avoided, and even then it was generally the case that the mourner would receive a brief leave to inter his parent. Changing policy with respect to *duoqing* reveals much about the Ming and then the Qing state's attitudes toward mourning, and is discussed in subsequent chapters.[60]

Although the state was largely unwilling to inquire into the specifics of its officials' mourning practices, concerning itself only with peaceful burial and the duration of mourning, an unspoken requirement was that officials maintain

58 The term *duoqing* appears first in the *Chen shu* 陳書, a Tang dynasty work in 36 *juan*. Although the term did not yet exist in the Han, at that time writers held to the notion that in similar circumstances mourning should be suspended. Yang Shuda, 258–59. *Duoqing* often appears combined with the phrase *qifu* 起復 (lit., "to return to the post"). *Duoqing* was first introduced to the English-speaking world by Lien-sheng Yang. See his "Schedules of Work and Rest in Imperial China," in Lien-sheng Yang, *Studies in Chinese Institutional History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), 23.

59 The *locus classicus* of the military exception (*jin'ge zhi shi* 金革之事) is the *Li ji*. Zi Xia 子夏 asked Confucius whether it was possible to avoid mourning during a military crisis. The sage's answer "I don't know 吾非知也" led subsequent commentators to view cutting short or avoiding mourning as permissible for a military official during a military emergency. *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 341. When circumstances permitted, military officials might demonstrate extreme filiality. Chen Xia 陳洽 was a specialist in military strategy in the early Ming. His father died while guarding the frontier at Wu Kai 五開, and Chen Xia made the difficult trek to retrieve his body, which he shouldered and transported personally. *Ming shi*, 4229.

60 For discussions of *duoqing* in Ming and Qing "jottings" see Shen Defu 深德符, *(Wanli) Yehuobian – bu yi* (萬曆) 野獲編 · 補遺4卷 (Taibei: Weiwen tushu chubanshe ed., 1976), 2206–8; Wang Shizhen 王士禎, *Chibei outan* 池北偶談36卷, 11a–b; Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, "Bensang shouzhi 奔喪守制," in *Ri zhi lu*, 6.28.

a discourse of filiality when discussing their parents. Even, for example, in instances when officials wanted to avoid mourning so as to remain at their posts, they would observe the formality of repeated entreaties to the court, begging for the opportunity to return home. Because of the parallel conception of society, an official could not argue that he should be more loyal to his sovereign than to his parents. And any perceived lapse in filiality on the part of emperor or officials might be a warning sign of the decadence that would lead to a passing of the Mandate of Heaven.[61]

Emotional aspects of loss

Certainly, despite the intense pressure to be filial, there were those who were relieved at the deaths of parents, or those who saw having to leave office to mourn as a useless burden that should be avoided at all costs. Politics, too, were at issue where mourning was concerned. The following chapters mention officials who colluded with their superiors to escape mourning obligations, or who schemed so that they could observe mourning at their post. And there were ambitious officials who kept a parent's death secret so they would not have to interrupt their careers.

Although such people existed, it cannot be assumed that they constituted the norm. To do so is to accept that mourning was a meaningless custom to which an entire civilization paid reluctant lip service. More likely, death and mourning rituals played an important role in helping individuals come to terms with a parent's death, in a society in which the parent–child bond – and particularly the parent–son bond – was intense.

What accounts for the intensity of the parent–son bond? Certainly, the examination system, which was widely considered the road to success in late imperial China, played a role. Sons who became officials brought fame and fortune to their families. For this reason, parents from the elite class (or those aspiring to become elites) put all their hopes in their sons. From a young age, parents, mothers in particular, lavished attention on their sons' education. Gui Youguang, a mid-Ming intellectual and writer, recorded with tender emotions how his mother would awaken him in the middle of the night to practice his recitations; only after he could recite perfectly would she let him go back to sleep.[62]

The texts children first encountered stressed the absolute devotion the young owed their parents. Children of the elite would first be taught to read from the

61 Officials were careful to compliment the emperor on his filial observances. See, for example, Memorial of Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀, September 7, 1743 (2禮儀硃批9), which commends the emperor for his sacrifices at the graves of his ancestors.

62 Gui Youguang 歸有光, "Xianpi shilue 先妣事略" *Zhen Chuan Xiansheng ji* 震川先生集, 1673, 30 + 11卷 (Taibei: Yuanliu Chubanshe, 1983), 594.

Trimetrical Classic (*San zi jing* 三字經), which placed tremendous stress on filial piety. Written in an easy-to-remember rhyming pattern and intended for memorization, the text was used to initiate young males into the rote study method by which they would prepare for the examinations. The *Trimetrical Classic* also served to indoctrinate children into the ways of filial piety.

To be filial toward parents,	孝於親	所當執
is what must be done;		
Rong at four *sui*,	融四歲	能讓梨
was able to yield the pears.[63]		

Kong Rong 孔融 lived during the Han dynasty. When he was only four *sui* (five or six years old) he already understood filial piety and the principle of yielding to elders. When his family received a basket of pears, Kong Rong took the smallest pear. When someone asked him, "How is it that you took the smallest?" Kong Rong replied: "I am the smallest person, so it is right that I take the smallest pear."[64]

The *Trimetrical Classic* even introduced its readers to the parallel conception of society. The principle of the younger's respect for the elder applied to minister and ruler.

Elder and younger have their order,	長幼序	友與朋
as do friend and friend.		
The ruler then is respected,	君則敬	臣則忠
the official then is loyal.[65]		

As children progressed into the Confucian canon, they would read other works that equally stressed filial piety as the society's core virtue.[66]

The *Classic of Filial Piety*, usually the second work a young boy would study, greatly elaborated the parallel conception of society. The filial son when grown was connected through a series of parallel obligations to parents and to ruler.

> The way of the relations between father and son is conferred by heaven, as is the relationship of righteousness (*yi* 義) between ruler and minister. Father and mother give one life, and nothing is greater than this. A ruler presides over one, and nothing is more

63 Wang Yinglin 王應麟, *San zi jing* 三字經 (Changsha: Yuelu Shushe, 1987), 5.
In traditional China, age was not reckoned as it is in the West. Instead, it was calculated by the number of years, or parts of years, in which one lived. This meant that a baby born on the last day of the year would be two *sui* during the first week of the new year. In this book, ages rendered in *sui* are noted as such; all other ages are reckoned according to the Western method.

64 *San zi jing*, 5.

65 *San zi jing*, 12.

66 The *Trimetrical Classic* outlined the order of study. "Having completed the *Classic of Filial Piety* and having read the Four Books [*Great Learning* 大學, *Doctrine of the Mean* 中庸, *Analects*, and *Mencius* 孟子], you may begin to read the Six Classics [*Classic of Odes* 詩經, *Classic of History* 書經, *Record of Rites* 禮記, *Classic of Music* 樂經 (now lost), *Classic of Changes* 易經, *Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋]." *San zi jing*, 16.

weighty than this. Therefore, one who does not love his parent, but loves others, should be considered a rebel against nature. And one who does not respect his parents, but respects others, should be considered a rebel against virtue.[67]

For a typical individual, nurtured on parental love and exposed to texts that taught the virtue of extreme sacrifice for parents, the natural reaction to a parent's death would be intense feelings of loss. So indeed we should not be surprised to read about the tremendous extents of grief expressed by individuals who lost parents. Nor should we wonder that some were willing to go to tremendous lengths to carry out filial duties.

A concomitant to the feelings of loss might well be feelings of guilt on the part of offspring. Having been raised by parents so intent on their education, there was only one way in which sons could truly requite all that parental love – and that was success in the examination system. The *Trimetrical Classic* outlined the career path of the good son:

Study when you are young,	幼而學	壯而行
and practice it when you are grown;		
Influence your ruler above,	上致君	下澤民
nourish the people below;		
Make a name for yourself,	揚名聲	顯父母
bring honor to your father and mother;		
Shed luster on your ancestors,	光於前	裕於後
bring riches to your progeny.[68]		

Yet, success in the examination system was an elusive goal for almost all Chinese males. Not only was it extremely difficult, and increasingly so during the Ming and Qing, to pass even the lowest rung of the examination system, but success in the system was always measured against achievement of the highest rung, the *jinshi*. No matter where one was on the ladder, a higher rung awaited. Even those who passed the *jinshi* might be disappointed, with even the second from the top coveting first place, the optimus (*zhuangyuan* 狀元).

In this highly competitive society, few indeed were the sons who could please their parents, and most may have reached middle age feeling that the family resources devoted to their education were largely squandered. These feelings might well have intensified when parents had educated their sons at great material sacrifice.[69]

Powerful feelings of guilt might have found their extreme expression at places like Suicide Cliff (Sheshenyai 捨身崖), one of the peaks on sacred Mount Tai. It was to this dreary precipice, to which no path led, that filial offspring

67 *Xiao jing jinzhu jinyi*, 16–17.

68 *San zi jing*, 41–42.

69 Hsiung Ping-chen's work has found that such sacrifices gave rise to a powerful bond between mother and son. See Hsiung Ping-chen, "Constructed Emotions: The Bond between Mothers and Sons in Late Imperial China," *Late Imperial China* 15, no. 1 (June 1994): 87–117.

Figure 1. Suicide Cliff, Mt. Tai, where filial children came to hurl themselves to their deaths, as a way of trying to save critically ill parents. From *Der T'ai-Schan und seine Kultstätten*, Druck und Verlag der Katholischen Mission, 1906.

would come to hurl themselves to their deaths, as a way of trying to save critically ill parents. Government officials made repeated attempts to prevent sons from taking their lives in this way. In the Ming a local official named He Qiming 何起鳴 (*jinshi* 1559) sought to end the practice by building a wall at the summit, renaming the spot "love-your-life cliff (Aishen yai 愛身崖)," and having rocks inscribed with "It is forbidden to jump."[70] In 1717 the wall was restored, apparently because the practice was still prevalent.[71] The Kangxi Emperor himself refused to visit the place, expressing disfavor with what he took to be a mistaken notion of filial piety.[72]

But some did choose to jump. The poet Wang Shichang 王世昌, echoing the parallel conception of society, noted that although suicide at the cliff was an unfilial act, it was permissible when done either for the emperor or for one's parents: "I also have a life but I count it weighty / and would sacrifice it only for emperor or parent."[73] And inscriptions on stones as late as 1900 suggested that the practice continued into the twentieth century.[74] Moreover, filial offspring need not always have made the pilgrimage to Mount Tai to kill themselves for their parents. Local gazetteers, like one from Yudu, Jiangxi, describe suicides in similar circumstances.[75]

Cutting off a slice of flesh to make medicine for an ailing parent (*gegu liaoqin* 割股療親) was similarly self-sacrificing and self-destructive. According to Kuwabara Jitsuzo, the practice first appeared in the Tang dynasty, with the appearance of *Bencao shiyi* 本草拾遺, a pharmacopeia written by Chen Zangqi 陳臧器.[76] During the Tang dynasty the practice was fairly common.[77] It was never prohibited, although in the year 1270 China's Mongol leaders declared that those who cut their flesh to make medicine for ailing relatives would no longer receive imperial recognition, a position that was also taken in the Ming dynasty and during part of the Qing.[78]

70 Nie qin 聶欽, *Taishan daoli ji* 泰山道里記, 不分卷 (Taibei, Wenhai Chubanshe ed., 1971), 28b; Xiao Xiezhong 蕭協中, *Xinke Taishan xiaoshi* 新刻泰山小史, 1卷, 18a. He Qiming was a native of Neijiang 內江, Sichuan.

71 Edouard Chavannes, *Le T'ai chan [Tai shan], Essai de monographie* (Paris: Bibliothèque d'Études #21, 1910), 63.

72 *Shengzu Ren Huangdi shilu* 聖祖仁皇帝實錄, *Qing shilu* 清實錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1986), 117.3b.

73 Quoted in *Zhongwen da cidian*, 12589.36. Wang Shichang was a portrait and landscape painter from Shandong. *Tuhui baojian* 圖繪寶鑑6卷 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju ed., 1985), 6.99.

74 Chavannes, 63. See also P. A. Tschepe, *Der T'ai-Schan [Tai Shan] und seine Kultstätten* (Jentschoufu: Druck und Verlag der Katholischen Mission, 1906), 120–24. I am indebted to Frederick Marquardt for translating the German.

75 Yu Wenlong 余文龍, *Ganzhou fuzhi* 贛州府志, 1621 20卷 (Beijing Tushuguan Microfilm ed., #3093–94, 1985), 16.112a.

76 Kuwabara, 124.

77 *Xin Tang shu*, 卷 195, 孝友傳.

78 *Yuan dian zhang* 元典章 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shudian ed., 1990), 33.19a–b; Kuwabara, 125. According to Kuwabara, Qing policy changed in 1728 as a result of the case of Li Shengshan 李盛山. In that year the governor of Fujian memorialized requesting an honorary plaque be

Suicides and cutting the flesh to save parents were extreme responses to guilt. Death rituals, too, offered avenues of self-sacrifice that could lead to expiation of guilt. Practices such as living in a hut near the grave, sleeping with a clod of dirt as a pillow, subsisting on gruel – these offered a deep reservoir of self-sacrificing practices to the bereaved, providing opportunities for self-denial that could help quench sorrow and guilt.[79]

Rituals could also work in another way to mediate feelings of guilt. By channeling the emotions, the rituals could guide the bereaved from extreme grief to normalcy, and thereby teach him or her that it was normal to feel desperate guilt and loss at the death of a parent. In stock phrases uttered at the condolence visits and printed in the death announcement, the chief mourner (generally the eldest son of the deceased) accepted complete blame for the death.

How was it possible for these rituals to function in this way? How can we accept that rituals could control emotions and even parasympathetic responses, making people cry at specific times? Consider a contemporary example. Sad movies bring tears through the careful presentation of a sequence of culturally familiar events. The young couple enjoys a moment of fleeting happiness, only to be separated by disease or death; the hero struggles to save the child, and returns him to his parents; the audience sobs.

If this channeling of emotions is possible for Hollywood, or a Shakespearean tragedy, how much more so for an ancient ritual sequence, with its own well-known symbols, which did not ask for the suspension of disbelief? Consider the Sacrifice of Repose (*yuji* 虞祭), the ritual performed on the day of the interment,

awarded to Li. His mother had been extremely ill, and to cure her Li cut a slice of his flesh and made a medicine for her. His mother was cured, but Li himself died from the self-inflicted wound. It was this special circumstance that led the Governor to request honors be awarded to Li. The Board of Rites, following precedent, rejected the governor's request. The Yongzheng Emperor overturned the Board's decision, saying that although Li had acted stupidly, his motives were of the highest. *Qing huidian shili* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1991), 403.505–6.

Actually, the change in policy predated 1728. On March 19, 1723, the Yongzheng Emperor issued an edict in which he asked local officials to come forward with examples of individuals heroically devoted to filial piety, so that "human relations might be informed, and popular customs transformed." Memorialists responded with stories of people who made medicine for parents and in-laws from their own flesh, and with accounts of filial sons who lived in huts near parents' graves for long periods. See Memorial of Wu Li 吳褧, January 15, 1726 (2禮科史書133), for examples and quotation of edict. See also Memorials of Tian Wenjing 田文鏡, January 22, 1726 (2禮科史書134), and Han Liangfu 韓良輔, January 11, 1727 (2禮科史書146).

79 One such guilt-ridden son was Zhao Qing 趙清, who because he was addicted to alcohol was unable to be a good son to his parents. After each of them died he inhabited a hut next to their graves. *Qing shi gao* 清史稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed. 1977), 13,737. Stories of sons availing themselves of these modes of grieving abound in the literature from Han through Qing. See Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in China: A Social History of Writing about Rites* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 32, 76; *Ming shi*, 4392, 6573.

after the corpse had been placed in the ground and after the mourners had returned home. Its purpose was to appease the spirit of the deceased, which could no longer make its way back to the corpse.

All participants subordinate to and including the chief mourner wash themselves, and the attendants set out all the utensils and food vessels. Those offering the sacrifice place the spirit tablet upon its pedestal. The chief mourner and his brothers (all of whom have gathered, leaning on their mourning canes outside the room) together with all those offering the sacrifice enter, and cry before the spirit tablet. All participants face north, ordered according to their degree of mourning, with those wearing the heavier mourning toward the front, and those wearing the lighter mourning toward the rear. Elders are seated, and younger participants stand. Husbands stay to the east, with those most senior on the western part of the eastern side. Wives stay to the west, with those most senior on the eastern part of the western side. Following this plan, all are ordered according to age; attendants stay to the rear.[80]

As the rituals themselves suggest, the sacrifice served other purposes as well.[81] Returning from the burial, the filial sons have finally disposed of the coffin, severing yet another tie with the deceased. In bathing themselves they seek purification from the polluting effects of the death. But the primary trajectory is emotional. Gathering outside the door, seeing each other and preparing to return to a house empty of their deceased kin, the primary mourners feel their grief deeply, and lean on their mourning canes for support.[82] They enter a room in which the family is gathered, with all members wearing the ancient mourning gowns, with their distinct fabrics of undyed hues. Naturally, they cry.

One is perhaps most struck by the notion that the sons "enter, and cry before the spirit tablet." It seems almost inconceivable that emotions could be turned on and off. But *Family Rituals* is replete with such language. Almost every ceremony in the death ritual section of the book describes when crying is to take place, and who is to do the crying. *Family Rituals* presents a world in which the deceased is guided smoothly to the grave, and the filial sons' emotions carefully channeled, leading them by stages to accept the loss of their parent.[83]

80 This depiction of the ritual is based on *Family Rituals* (Ebrey), and *Zhuzi jia li* (Siku quanshu ed.), vol. 142, 563.

81 Zheng Xuan's commentary on the need for the *yuji* rite states: "The bones and flesh return to the earth; the material force of the *hun* [魂] soul goes everywhere. The filial son is agitated and uncertain because of this and so makes three sacrifices to calm the soul." *Family Rituals* (Ebrey), 126.

82 The mourning cane was carried by those mourning the deceased in the heaviest degree. See Figure 2.

83 I do not contend that all crying at funerals was parasympathetic. Wailing was a pervasive feature of the Chinese funeral, although at least one writer has argued that it was generally "a genuine expression of grief." C. K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society: A Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religion and Some of Their Historical Factors* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961), 35.

Figure 2. The mourning cane, an important feature of the traditionally prescribed mourning apparel. Carried by the chief mourner as a sign of deepest grief. From the collection *San li tu*, published in 1176.

It was this capability of the rituals, their ability to guide the emotions, that made them such a powerful tool for the bereaved. In the next chapter, we will take up the question of how Ming social attitudes changed with regard to this outlook on rituals.

2

The reorientation of Ming attitudes toward mourning

On the surface the Ming dynasty followed a standard turn of the dynastic cycle. It began with a peasant capturing the Mandate of Heaven from a decadent and moribund dynasty, proceeded with the new emperor and his ministers reestablishing a revivified Confucian government, and finished with the imperial line growing successively weaker, finally falling victim to the forces that had caused the ruin of its predecessor. In filial piety, too, the Ming dynasty seemed to follow the standard path. The first Ming emperor, Hongwu 洪武, promulgated the *Record of Filial Piety and Benevolence* to return the people and members of the officialdom to the path of filial piety so neglected by his Yuan predecessors.[1] For some reigns – for example that of the Hongzhi 弘治 Emperor (r. 1488–1506) – Confucian rule seemed to prevail.[2] By dynasty's end, however, filial piety was neglected, and the lessons of Hongwu ignored.

For all its adherence to the model of dynastic cycle, however, there was much about the Ming that deviated from the pattern. This chapter suggests that some of the deviation can be traced to changes instituted during the reign of Hongwu; the "revivified" Confucianism he promulgated was not based entirely on the textual precedents embodied in the considerable Confucian texts on mourning. Instead, with the aid of his top officials, Hongwu changed ancient and well-known rules to fit his own conception of natural emotions. When he believed his subjects felt or should feel a particular way, he changed the rituals to make them accord with those feelings.

Late Ming literati, though they lacked the prerogatives traditionally accorded rulers, furthered the process begun by Hongwu. They felt a new freedom to change rituals, modifying old ones and inventing new ones to make

1 *Xiao ci lu* 孝慈錄 1375 2o卷 in *Kōmin seisho* 皇明制書 (Tokyo: Koten Kenkyūkai, 1966–67).

2 Hongzhi was reputed to be the most Confucian of Ming emperors. See L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang (eds.), *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368–1644* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 375–8o. On his Confucian observances following the death of the Chenghua 成化 Emperor, see Dai Jin 戴金 (ed.), *Huang Ming tiaofa shi lei zuan* 皇明條法事類纂, 1527 5o卷 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku fuzoku toshokan, 1966), 上.572.

rituals accord with perceptions of which emotions were natural. Although there were precedents for such changes, none were as pervasive as those of the late Ming. This change in literati attitude set the stage for many of the changes of the early Qing that will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Rituals and royal prerogatives

When it came to rituals, rulers of China were in a unique position. As both political and sacral leaders, they were entitled to make changes to rituals and mandate that these be observed throughout China. This special role accounts for the conspicuous presence both of emperors and of the imperial voice in this text. At the beginnings of reigns and dynasties, in particular, the imperial prerogative included pronouncements extolling the importance of filial piety, or the making of new rules to make the government more filial.[3] At times, these pronouncements were little more than that: statements generated bureaucratically and emitted under the imperial imprimatur. But often, especially during reigns in which the emperor was strong and the paperwork manageable, these new rules came from the emperor himself, who accepted his prerogative as arbiter of filial piety.

Empress Wu 武 of the Tang, who usurped the throne in 685, was one such strong ruler able to effect changes to the mourning canon. Her changes to the received rules of mourning were evidently intended to raise the status of women, by lengthening the period of mourning for the mother to equal the father's.

Prior to Wu's reign, when a father was still living, his sons mourned their mother only in the second degree, though they carried the mourning cane as a sign of deepest grief. This action emphasized the primacy of the father, while recognizing the strong emotional bond between mother and son. Empress Wu changed the practice, ordering that each son mourn his mother, still in the second degree but for a period equal to that of first-degree mourning.[4]

3 In addition to the examples discussed in this chapter, see the following from the *Ming History*: *Ming shi* 明史 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed.), 1459 (changes by the Zhengde Emperor to revivify mourning); ibid., 216 (Jiajing Emperor's prohibition of *duoqing*); ibid., 1492 (Hongwu's extensive regulations on funerals).

4 Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Beijing, Zhonghua Shuju, 1975), 20.443. Zhou Baogui 周保珪, *Zhifu biao* 制服表, in Yan Roju 閻若璩 et al., *Duli congchao*, Guoxue jiyao #2 (Wenhai Chubanshe ed.), 597. Zhou was *juren* of 1873, from Jiading 嘉定, Jiangsu. An acerbic comment by Liu Xu 劉昫, of the latter Jin dynasty (936–47), indicates the extent to which Empress Wu's change, to one of her critics, erased distinctions between mourning for father and mother: "The family may not have two heads; mourning may not have two first degrees: the one who is served [as family head] may not be two." Liu Xu 劉昫, *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1975), 27.1033. The comment is structured after a passage in the *Record of Rites*. *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 825.

Such changes by imperial fiat might be quite influential: by the late Ming, Empress Wu's proscription was still widely observed, and it was instituted in Ming law.[5] As with other rulers who succeeded in making changes that long outlived them, the durability of their innovations had less to do with the fact of autocratic rule in China than it did with the extent to which the new or changed rules met people's needs. Empress Wu's change made sense to people; thus it was widely observed long after her death. Many other imperial pronouncements on ritual were loosely observed, and were never published in ritual compendia.

Hongwu, founding emperor of the Ming dynasty, made far-reaching changes in the rules of mourning. This strong-willed peasant turned emperor had lasting influence on the system of mourning, and on much of the subsequent institutional history of imperial China.[6]

Some of Hongwu's changes were clearly meant to "cleanse" China from the pollution of still popular practices brought about by the Mongol Yuan dynasty. In 1372 Hongwu decreed an end to water burial (*shuizang* 水葬) and cremation (*huozang* 火葬), and ordered local officials to deal with situations in which those deceased within their jurisdictions were without grave sites.

> In former times there were rules (*ling* 令) about covering the skeleton and burying the flesh, but in recent times people have become accustomed to perverse Yuan practices, and cremate their dead, or throw their parents' bones into the water. This is a harm to grace and a defeat of custom, and nothing is more serious than this. It is now prohibited. If there are those who are poor and without land, let local officials find some spacious and unused land (*kuanxian* 寬閒) to use as a public cemetery (*yizhong* 義塚), so that they may have a place to bury. If the deceased are traveling officials seeking office who cannot be returned for burial let the local officials provide money to return them.[7]

But the cleansing process begun by Hongwu did not faithfully return the state to pre-Yuan precedents. In formulating changed or revivified policy Hongwu was guided not by orthodox texts but by his own sense of how rituals should be performed. The thrust of his reforms was to make mourning rituals consonant with what he considered to be natural affections. If it was evident to

5 On Ming influence of Wu's change, see Zha Jizo 查繼佐, *Zui wei lu* 罪惟錄, 36卷 (Zhejiang: Guji Chubanshe, 1986), 7.689. On the rule in Ming law see *Xiao ci lu*, 12.16b–17a; and Huang Zhangjian 黃彰健, *Mingdai lüli huibian* 明代律例彙編 (Taibei: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan ed., 1979), 1.24–25 (chart).

6 As Edward L. Farmer notes, "it would not be a great exaggeration to say that the 'traditional' China of the period before the Opium Wars was in large part a product of the early Ming. The Ming founding is worth studying for the impression it left on Chinese society." Edward L. Farmer, "Social Regulations of the First Ming Emperor: Orthodoxy as a Function of Authority," in Kwang-ching Liu, ed., *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 105.

7 *Ming shi*, 1492.

him that a bond should exist between two people, then he sought to change the rituals to make them conform to that emotion.[8]

Hongwu's changes, like Empress Wu's, were often concerned with how women were mourned. In particular, he sought to elevate the status of concubines. Ordinarily, if a man took a concubine, the children of that union would mourn their mother for a period of only one year, in the second degree, while children of the primary wife would mourn their mother for three years.[9] The goal of this practice had been to maintain the primacy of the relationship between husband and primary wife as definitive of the family unit. Hongwu changed the rule, requiring that the sons of concubines mourn their mother for the full three-year period.[10]

Hongwu also felt that a son, in addition to mourning his parents and his own secondary mother, should also mourn three years for stepmothers (*jimu* 繼母), "benevolent" mothers (*cimu* 慈母), and "nourishing" mothers (*yangmu* 養母).[11] He believed these were all women toward whom sons should also feel a bond of obligation. A benevolent mother was chosen by a husband from among his concubines, after his wife died, to raise as her own one or more of the dead woman's children. A nourishing mother was a concubine who was designated by the father to raise one of his children while the child's birth mother was still living.[12]

Hongwu also changed the rules of mourning that applied specifically to daughters. Thus, while a daughter was unmarried (and consequently still part of her parents' household) she mourned her parents in the same ways her brothers did. And when she was on her "great return" (*da gui* 大歸), returning home for the funeral of a parent, then she mourned likewise in the first degree.[13]

Hongwu had a special regard for some of the women in his life, and this sentiment may well have motivated him to elevate the status of women in

8 Hongwu, and others who wrote about emotion and ritual, used the terms *qing* 情 (emotion) or *xin* 心 (heart-and-mind) to describe what rituals should conform to. I generally use the term "natural emotion" for their use of *renqing* 人情 or *renxin* 人心, because to me it captures their meaning. It was natural, they argued, to feel emotion for a mother who was a concubine – this was *renqing* or *renxin*.

9 For classical precedents and Song dynasty practices, see Patricia Ebrey, "Concubines in Sung [Song] China," *Journal of Family History* 11, no. 1 (1986): 4–5.

10 *Xiao ci lu* 12.17a. The issue was evidently of great concern to Hongwu; he took it up in his preface to this work.

11 *Xiao ci lu*, 12.17a. See Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, "Jimu ru mu 繼母如母" and "Cimu ru mu 慈母如母," in Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, *Ri zhi lu* 日知錄, Wanyou Wenku ed. (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1928), 2.101–2.

12 *Zui wei lu*, 7.687. Taizu's beneficence toward women did not extend to the case of a woman who remarried after her husband's death. "In 1391 the *jinshi* Wang Xizeng 王希曾 requested that the remarried mother should be mourned for three years; it was not permitted [by the emperor]." Ibid.

13 *Xiao ci lu*, 12.17a.

mourning. When he and his first wife (the future empress Ma) had both been commoners, she was instrumental in his rise to power. After her death, Hongwu refused to elevate his secondary consort to the rank of empress, an action which at the time was considered without precedent. The founding Ming emperor's special regard extended also to his favorite consort, Sun Guifei 孫貴妃, who died in 1374. When she died without a son, the emperor designated his fifth son, Zhu Su 朱橚, to mourn her for a period of three years.[14]

Though Hongwu elevated the status of women, nothing in his way of thinking was against the ultimate authority of the father. But a sense of natural affection was central to his view: ritual would not control but would refine and originate in and be reinforced by natural emotion.

Hongwu used the logic of natural emotion as a rationale for suppressing heterodox funeral practices. Extravagance, for example, and excessive belief in geomancy were wrong because they undermined proper emotions, not because they violated specific textual sanctions. For him this was not innovation, but preservation of antiquity.

> Ancient funeral rituals took grief and sadness as their bases. A family in mourning would employ none of today's extravagances. People act way above their stations, and if they cannot afford [a lavish funeral] they borrow money and precious things in order to show off. When it comes to the burial they are deluded by geomancy. They postpone the burial for years and do not carry the dead to a peaceful burial. It is fitting that the Secretariat collect their thoughts and draft a rule that can be published, then the violators can be treated as being guilty according to the law.[15]

Although Hongwu looked to the requirements of natural emotion rather than to the textual authority imbued in past precedents in formulating his ideas on mourning, the above passage suggests that he sought to use regulations to enforce the conclusions he drew. Thus it was not that he lacked faith in the power of rules; rather, he simply did not believe in the precedent-forming power of past rules. He drew his conclusions from his own sense of what the structure of mourning should be, and from a more vague sense of how "the ancients" mourned.

The result of his concern over heterodox funeral practices was a law for officials and common people alike, in the *Collected Ming Institutions*. It prohibited belief in geomancy when the result was an unburied corpse left in the house for "several years (*jingnian* 經年)." It also included a provision against feasting, which was defined in the statute as drinking wine and eating meat during the period of mourning. For the perpetrator – who was defined as the "family head

14 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 350.

15 Fu Fengxiang 傅鳳翔, *Huang Ming zhaoling* 皇明詔令, 1539 21卷 (Taibei: Chengwen Chubanshe ed., 1967), 2.5b–6a.

(*jiazhang* 家長)" in the case of feasting – the punishment was eighty blows of the heavy bamboo.[16]

Exactly how successful Hongwu was in his drive to reform popular practices is a matter open to debate. We do not, for example, know the extent to which his new rules were enforced. But there was a conspicuous way in which Hongwu's rules were important: they adulterated the textual authority for mourning regulations. When Hongwu put new rules in place, he added a new and sometimes contradictory layer of authority, so that deciding how to mourn was made more difficult. For example, Guan Zhidao 管志道 (1536–1608), whose writings on mourning are discussed more fully toward the end of this chapter, felt compelled to choose between the rules of mourning in *Decorum Rituals* (*Yi li* 儀禮) and those of Hongwu. He chose Hongwu's because they conformed to natural emotion.[17]

But rules for the officialdom were another matter. Hongwu controlled officials with a stern hand, and they found his rules on mourning difficult to evade. It was they who, willing or not, adhered to his implementation of the parallel conception of society, as discussed in the following sections.

The revivification of Confucianism Hongwu presided over displayed a serious commitment to the parallel conception of society. Hongwu perceived all in society as part of a unity that included the relationship of sons to their father, and, paralleling this, of people to their ruling officials, and of ruling officials to the emperor.[18] Beginning with the rectification of his family, he sought and largely succeeded in making his sons, the Ming princes, obedient to the rules of filial piety.[19]

The system of state mourning (*guo sang* 國喪) further exemplified Hongwu's

16 *Mingdai lüli huibian* IV:25, 612–13. See also *Huang Ming tiaofa shi lei zuan*, 上.572. Eighty blows was a severe punishment. In the range of corporeal punishment, the greatest number was one hundred (punishment, for example, for what was similar, in the British common law, for "breaking and entering in the nighttime with intent to steal 夜無故入人家"). Ibid., VI:24, 791–92.

17 I am indebted to an anonymous reader for Cambridge University Press who called this text to my attention.

18 "In the families of officials and commoners it is essential that there be affection between father and son. The people of the realm must know the correct duty [*i*] between ruler and minister. It is essential for there to be distinction between husband and wife. Neighboring relatives must maintain precedence of the old over the young. There must be good faith between friends. The masses must respect those with virtue without regard for the order of age or distinction of generation. This is the great ritual of the ancients." Quoted in Farmer, "Social Regulations," 114.

19 The *Ming shi*'s discussion of the Ming princes and their progeny depicts adherence to filial piety in the time of Hongwu, and particularly to Hongwu's vision of filial piety. Hongwu's grandson, the Xian Wang 憲王, son of Hongwu's sixth son, was known for serving his mother, the concubine Deng 鄧, with filial piety. Careful filial attentions to a mother who was a concubine was, it will be remembered, a Hongwu innovation. *Ming shi*, 3571.

commitment to the parallel conception of society. Under his rule, emperors were mourned as fathers and empresses as mothers. The *locus classicus* of this provision was the *Rituals of Zhou* (*Zhou li* 周禮), which states: "Wear first degree mourning for the Prince of Heaven (Tian Wang 天王), for the Prince's wife wear second degree."[20] But not all rulers implemented state mourning.

Hongwu early showed his commitment to state mourning, beginning with the 1382 funeral of Empress Ma. The Board of Rites followed Song dynasty precedents in arranging Ma's funeral. Civil and military officials stationed in the capital were to leave office, change to cotton clothing, and then wear first-degree mourning for a period of twenty-seven days. Then they were to wear plain, unadorned clothes until the hundredth day. Capital officials were to appear for three days at the palace to perform rituals. On the fourth day, military officials above the rank of five, civil officials above the rank of three, and their primary wives, were to wear plain clothes to the palace rituals. The women's heads were to be covered in hemp, and their jewelry was to be removed. Officials outside the capital were to follow rituals identical to those being practiced at the capital, with allowance made for the length of time required for the announcement of the death to reach the provinces. Civil officials were prohibited from marrying for a period of one hundred days, military officials for one month. Commoners, too, were to mourn the empress's death. The slaughtering of meat was prohibited in the capital for forty-nine days, and outside it for three days. Music and auspicious rituals were to cease for one hundred days.[21]

Certainly, Hongwu's special affection for this wife helps explain the extent to which state mourning was observed. At the same time, though, his implementation of that practice demonstrates his serious embrace of the parallel conception of society. He assumed the presence of an emotional bond between the empress and the people that was naturally a part of that bond. The relationship between empress and ruled, in this conception, paralleled that of parent and child.

An important ramification of Hongwu's parallel conception of society was the way in which he applied to himself the same standards that he expected his subjects to observe. Thus, when in the first year of his reign (1368) the censor Gao Yuankan 高原侃 memorialized suggesting that practices which resulted in certain indignities at funerals should be prohibited, Hongwu went beyond agreeing with him and decreed that the funerals of emperors, for the same reason, should be without music.[22]

It was in this spirit that funeral observances were arranged for Hongwu

20 *Zhou li jinzhu jinyi* 周禮今注今譯 (Taiwan: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1972), 5.221.

21 *Ming shi*, 1455.

22 *Zui wei lu*, 7.686. As late as the Chenghua Emperor's funeral (1487) music was still not used. *Huang Ming tiaofa shi lei zuan*, 上.570.

himself. The rituals and procedures established by the Board of Rites were imbued with notions of the ritual devotion ministers should feel for their rulers. Even ministers at the lonely outposts of the empire were expected to fulfill elaborate rituals.[23] These ritual procedures were maintained for later Ming emperors as well. When Jianwen 建文 (r. 1399–1402), the second Ming emperor, died, the procedures closely followed those established for Hongwu.[24]

The most conspicuous example of Hongwu's embrace of the parallel conception of society was his disdain for *duoqing*, the practice by which officials whose parents died would, on imperial orders, either shorten or forgo completely their mourning periods. Filiality between parent and child reinforced the loyalty between official and emperor. For this reason, Hongwu opposed *duoqing*.

Beyond prohibiting *duoqing*, Hongwu ordered that officials observe the old requirement of dropping everything and hastening home when they heard of a parent's death.[25] The *Collected Ming Institutions* records that "at the start of the dynasty it was ordered that when the various officials hear of a parent's death, they do not wait for written permission but immediately leave their official positions."[26] Hongwu's mandate that officials drop everything and leave presumed an emotional state in which the bereaved was unable to focus on anything but the news of the death, and left for home without any thought of his official duties. Hongwu was willing to tolerate the bureaucratic dislocation that resulted, for the sake of the parallel conception of society.

This hastening to mourn (*bensang* 奔喪) was a ritual all its own, as the procedure in *Family Rituals* suggests. When the son learned of his parent's death he was to respond with tears to the messenger. Then, before again being consumed in tears, he was to inquire into the cause of death. He would then change into plain clothes and begin his journey, traveling quickly (a note states at the rate of 100 *li* per day), and in daylight only. On the road, he was to avoid markets and other densely crowded areas, and when he felt grief well up in him he was to cry. When he crossed the border into his province, county, city or

23 A minister of the early Ming, stationed at his lonely post in (for example) southern Jiangxi Province, would be expected, on receiving the proclamation of the emperor's death, to change immediately into unadorned clothing. This would consist of his "raven's hat" (*wushamao* 烏紗帽) and "black cornered girdle" (*heijiaodai* 黑角帶). Then he was to make four obeisances (*bai* 拜) and commence grieving. *Da Ming huidian* 大明會典, 1577 228卷 (Taibei: Dongnan Shubao ed., 1963), 96.2a–b. *Ming shi*, 1446.

24 *Ming shi*, 1446–47.

25 For a fuller discussion of these issues see Gu Yanwu, "Dingyou jiaodai 丁憂交代," in *Ri zhi lu*, 6.29–30.

26 *Da Ming huidian*, 11.2a. Not doing so left the mourner as culpable as one who had avoided mourning (*nisang* 匿喪) or shortened the mourning period (*duansang* 短喪). Ibid.

village, and finally courtyard, he was to cry each time anew (for these were borders the crossing of which brought him closer to his home and to the deceased).[27]

Hongwu's enforcement of the practice of hastening home reflected his acceptance of the parallel conception of society. The logic implicit in his decrees was that officials loyal to their parents would be loyal to the state, and beyond this that the practice of correct rituals for parents would reinforce the sense of obligation to the state.

Even before the end of the Hongwu reign, however, the stress on the bureaucracy from such orthodox observance of the mourning rituals became apparent, and change became necessary. In 1393 it was decreed that officials should no longer "drop everything" and return for mourning. Instead, requests to arrange mourning (*dingyou* 丁憂) had to receive clearance from the relevant Board, and officials serving at the capital had to prepare memorials with the dates of their leaves.[28]

The same year saw further retrenchment. Originally, Hongwu had declared that officials should be given leave to mourn relatives other than parents: those for whom mourning was usually worn for one year (*qifu* 期服). This practice was discontinued after the Board of Personnel complained that allowing officials to mourn too many deceased relatives would result in too much time spent away from the post.

> "If we order that all [those mourning at the *qifu* level] may hurry home to observe mourning, then perhaps someone will meet with many misfortunes, and have five or six periods of mourning. Or the road might be several thousand *li*, and then the days that they would serve at their posts would be few. If we change [the length of the mourning leave] then the calculations will be troubling. Distant officials' labors are already being lost. From now on, except for those cases in which mourning is for parents, or for grandparents in which [the official] is chief mourner (*chengzhong zhe* 承重者) and has arranged mourning, others observing a period of mourning are not permitted to hasten home, although they may send someone to perform the sacrifices." This was followed.[29]

In the interest of bureaucratic efficiency, then, mourning could be arranged only when one was observing a parent's death, or when one was serving as chief mourner.[30]

The 1394 modifications notwithstanding, Hongwu's system emphasized the mourning obligations of officials for parents, and prohibited *duoqing*. And

27 *Family Rituals* (Ebrey), 100–101. *Jia li* (Siku quanshu ed.), 142.555–56.

28 *Da Ming huidian*, 11.2a.

29 *Ming shi*, 1491. A grandson would serve as chief mourner when his father predeceased his grandfather.

30 Gu Yanwu in the Qing recommended that Hongwu's original policy be observed. See his "Bensang shouzhi 奔喪守制," in *Ri zhi lu*, 6.28.

though mourning leaves would be restricted to those who were mourning parents, even that entailed a sizable commitment to the parallel conception of society.[31]

The extent of Hongwu's commitment to the parallel conception of society, a Confucian principle, should not be seen as conflicting with his personal interest in Buddhism. Although as a youth Hongwu had been a novice in the Buddhist sangha, in later life he expressed belief in "the Unity of the Three Teachings." That is, he came to believe that Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism were to be construed not as irreconcilable teachings but as differing manifestations of essentially similar truths.

Hongwu was a syncretist. Syncretism, which Judith Berling defines (in contrast to eclecticism) as "attempting to reconcile elements from more than one religion," received, she notes, a "measure of imperial sanction" in the founding emperor's edicts, in which they "took on an air of inviolable authority." These edicts were cited by those who sought official legitimacy for the doctrine of the Unity of the Three Teachings.[32]

In 1391, Hongwu advanced the cause of Buddhist funeral specialists in China by promulgating a reclassification system for Buddhist monasteries. The effect of this new system, Chün-fang Yü has noted, was to replace monasteries stressing religious discipline with those whose members performed rituals for lay believers.[33]

None of Hongwu's pro-Buddhist innovations should be assumed as condoning the widespread personalization of mourning or funeral rituals. But his efforts did help make Buddhist practices part of acceptable discourse, and later emperors built on his precedents. When Jianwen (the second Ming emperor) died, sacrifices to him were made in the Buddhist way: with fruit and wine only, not with meat. And orders were issued that throughout the capital Buddhist monasteries should toll their bells thirty thousand times, the din to better speed the emperor on his journey.[34]

31 Hongwu also supported mourning by providing stipends for officials on mourning leave. The first of these was awarded in 1377. "Bensang shouzhi," 6.29.

32 Judith A. Berling, *The Syncretic Religion of Lin Chao-en* [Zhaoen] (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 5, 46. On Hongwu's syncretism see also Araki Kengo 荒木見悟, *Shinpan Bukkyō to Jukyō* 新版佛教と儒教 (Kyoto: Kenbun Shuppan, 1993).

33 "Since monasteries stressing discipline were gradually replaced by those specializing in religious ritual, discipline was gradually neglected and a steady commercialization of monks took place. These two changes might very well have been under way before [Hongwu] took action, but we can be sure that his measures intensified the process." Chün-fang Yü, *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-hung [Zhuhong] and the Late Ming Synthesis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 148. In this and other ways, Hongwu "accorded the monks specializing in rituals (especially funerals for the dead) particular favor." Ibid., 150.

34 *Ming shi*, 1447, 1448. Buddhist practices were by no means illegal, though the law did regulate them. See *Mingdai lüli huibian*, IV:20, 608.

Nonofficial developments in mourning and filial piety

There were others in the Ming besides Hongwu who sought to return the people to the ways of filial pity, and thereby cleanse China from the effects of Mongol rule. A movement to accomplish this goal came even before the end of the Yuan dynasty. According to Tokuda Susumu, that movement had its origins in the societies (*she* 社) formed at the local level to provide mutual protection against thieves and gangs. Although begun to provide a police function, these societies quickly turned to the reinvigoration of Confucian values as a way of combating the Mongol influence.[35]

Many within the society movement shared a widespread fascination with a set of stories known as the "Twenty-Four Cases of Filial Piety (*Ershisi Xiao* 二十四孝)." Modern scholars (following Hayashi Razan 林羅山) believe the text of the Twenty-Four Cases was written by Guo Jujing 郭居敬, a famously filial resident of Datian 大田, Fujian, who composed it with the help of two associates.[36] Through the end of the Yuan and beginning of the Ming, new editions of, and embellishments to, these stories proliferated.

Drawn from historical events, the Twenty-Four Cases of Filial Piety are examples of extreme devotion on the part of children, but they are most striking for their sentimental depictions of filial values. Two of the Twenty-Four Cases treat funerals and mourning directly. One is the story of Wang Pou 王裒, who lived during the Wei dynasty. His mother suffered from a lifelong terror of thunder. After her death, he buried her in a peaceful mountain grove. When storms threatened and he heard sounds in the sky he would run to her grave, bowing and crying, "Do not be afraid Mother; Pou is here, Pou is here."[37] The other case that deals with funerals and mourning is that of Dong Yong 董永, who lived during the Han. The child of a poor family, he sold himself to obtain money for his father's funeral expenses.[38]

After the fall of the Yuan, the Twenty-Four Cases continued to gain in popularity, and editions of them spread widely through the South. New sets of twenty-four cases were also written, such as the "Twenty-Four Cases of Filial Piety for Women." In all there were at least thirty-three different sets of Twenty-Four Cases.[39] Taken together, the phenomenon of the Twenty-Four

35 Tokuda Susumu 德田進, *Koshi setsuwashu no kenkyū* 孝子説話集の研究 (Tokyo: Inoue Shobo, 1963), 133–36.
36 Tokuda Susumu, 145–48.
37 *Ershisi xiao* 二十四孝 (Columbia University 1682.2 1464), 42.
38 *Ershisi xiao*, 13–14.
39 Tokuda Susumu, 159–62.

Cases demonstrates that a preoccupation with filial piety existed outside official circles.[40]

Through the Ming, the reform of local culture continued under gentry influence. In the early sixteenth century, increasing commercialism led to the rapid growth in the numbers of gentry, which resulted in greater competition in the examination system. This demographic condition meant that proportionately fewer and fewer elites could win government positions. As Timothy Brook has noted, "with the weakening of their ties to the state, their social and political interests – as well as the economic interests they had always had as landowners – shifted to local society." It was out of their interest in local society, Brook notes, that gentry turned to ritual – both for its ability to restore their paternalistic authority, and to build lineages.[41]

Kai-wing Chow similarly emphasizes the role of commercialism in the regained interest in ritual. His stress, in contrast to Brook's, is on the erosion of Confucian values it, along with urbanization and population growth, brought about. In a society that came to recognize only "power and money," a revival of interest in ritual was an ethical response by Confucians who sought to return Chinese society to the path of virtue.[42]

Gentry-led movements to reform ritual made great strides in the Ming. As Brook notes, this development was evident in the increased numbers of local gazetteers that reported funerals in their areas to be less Buddhistic and more Confucian. But the task of reforming popular practices was an immense one. And while gazetteers report the increasing observance of Confucian rituals and the decline of Buddhism, they also continued to note the immense diversity of beliefs. At the same time, improved communications and a burgeoning printing industry helped make that diversity apparent.

Because the movement to reform funeral culture in the Ming was gentry-led and lineage-oriented, those who were marginal, or outside influential lineages, continued to adhere to beliefs that were both potent and unorthodox.[43] It is perhaps outside the "customs (*fengsu* 風俗)" sections of local gazetteers that some of the most unorthodox beliefs about death can be found.

In the "Anecdote (Yishi 軼事)" section of a gazetteer from Anyuan 安遠,

40 These stories were meant to contrast sharply with stories of widespread neglect of the most basic rules of morality in the Yuan, when sons could marry their father's concubines, and even their own sisters. Tokuda Susumu, 132–33.

41 Timothy Brook, "Funerary Ritual and the Building of Lineages in Late Imperial China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 49, no. 2 (December 1989): 470–71.

42 Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China: Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 19, 40.

43 Here a vast literature might be cited. See the heterodox practices noted in Zhao Dingbang 趙定邦, *Changxing xianzhi* 長興縣志 1873 32卷 (Taibei: Chengwen Chubanshe ed., 1976), 16.5b–6a; Kong Zhaoxiong 孔兆熊 *Qinyuan xianzhi* 沁源縣志 1933 8卷 (Taibei: Chengwen Chubanshe ed., 1975), 7.5a–b; Wang Wenbing 汪文炳, *Fuyang xianzhi* 富陽縣志 1899 24卷 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Renmin Chubanshe ed., 1993), 15.4a–b.

Jiangxi, for example, the editor notes the return to life of the wife of the Government Student Ye Can 業燦. She had been buried for some time, when suddenly a voice was heard to say: "I'm back." From that time on the furnishings were arranged in the same way as when she was alive, and she was able to prepare food for her husband, although they did not sleep together, because he refused to sleep with a ghost. Her voice was present, but she remained shapeless. The phenomenon continued for several months, and then stopped.[44] Another Jiangxi gazetteer describes how the esoteric Daoist Zhao Yuanyang 趙原陽 learned to defeat the processes of death. His body sweated and otherwise remained lifelike for three days after he had expired, and even after his death the grass remained green around his tomb.[45]

Gazetteers were written in a distinctive style. Considered to be edited (*bian* 編) rather than authored (*zhu* 著), their descriptions of local practices generally did not include a scholar's detailed personal ruminations. This was not the case for other genres. The "jottings," philosophical texts, and other writings of the Ming left more space for the author to detail his opinions. It was in these genres, especially in the late Ming, that a new topic became popular: emotion. Writers on death and mourning begin to argue that natural emotions should play the primary role in determining mourning practices.[46] This development is not unprecedented in Chinese history. At other times, those who wrote about rituals emphasized that they should conform to emotions. But it reached unprecedented heights in the late Ming, as the next sections show.

The late Ming

The late Ming saw a new preoccupation with emotion (*qing* 情). As Chou Chih-p'ing has noted, for the world of aesthetics at that time "literary critics passionately argued as never before that the function of literature was nothing but the exhibition of human emotions." In this climate, "the concept of literature as a vehicle for moralistic and utilitarian purposes was no longer dominant."[47] In ritual, too, a similar transformation took place. Many elites were coming to consider rituals as vehicles for the expression of emotion.

Gui Youguang, the scholar and literary critic introduced in the preceding chapter, heralded the connection between ritual and emotion when he pro-

44 Yu Zuolin 于作霖, *Anyuan xianzhi* 安遠縣志, 1683 10卷 (Beijing Tushuguan Microfilm ed., # 04966/3100, 1985), 8.5b–6a. The gazetteer relates a similar event that occurred in 1675.

45 Lu Zhenxian 盧振先, *Yudu xianzhi* 雩都縣志, 1708 14卷 (Beijing Tushuguan Microfilm ed., # 04961/3096, 1985), 10.1b–4a; Yu Wenlong 余文龍, *Ganzhou fuzhi* 贛州府志, 1621 20卷 (Beijing Tushuguan Microfilm ed., # 3093–94, 1985), 17.12b–13a.

46 On terminological issues, see note 8, above.

47 Chou Chih-p'ing, *Yuan Hung-tao* [Yuan Hongdao] *and the Kung-an* [Gongan] *School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 3.

claimed, "all the world's ritual begins with human emotion."[48] This emphasis on emotion pervaded elite circles by the late Ming, as the following sections of this chapter demonstrate.

The late Ming emphasis on emotion had specific ramifications for the world of ritual. The inherited texts on the performance of rituals – primarily Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals* – presented an unvarying model for how the dead were to be mourned. Emotion was the product of rituals properly performed. Put another way, rituals channeled emotions. In the late Ming, the assumption was reversed: a preexistent emotion determined when and how, or even if, a ritual should be performed. In this climate, what had been a royal prerogative became a presumed right of individuals. And late Ming ideas on ritual generally placed more emphasis on the individual as a source of authority.

This new outlook on ritual was consonant with new trends in Neo-Confucian thought of the late Ming.[49] The two greatest thinkers of the middle to late Ming are generally considered to have been Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472–1529) and Zhan Ruoshui 湛若水 (1466–1560).[50] The schools of thought they founded both followed the great Cantonese thinker Chen Xianzhang 陳獻章 (1428–1500). Chen's innovation was essentially his freedom from the book learning of Song dynasty scholars. He turned to the self and to moral principle (*li* 理) for the truth.

In his freedom from books Chen also freed himself from literal adherence to the rites. When his mother died he observed the mourning rites faithfully, but he went further and decided to abstain from wearing silk for the rest of his life. His innovation betokened his "perpetual mourning," but it was an innovation without stated precedent. It was a personal decision about how he wanted to commemorate his mother's death.[51]

48 Gui Youguang 歸有光, *Zhenchuan Xiansheng ji* 震川先生集, 30 + 11卷 1673 (Taibei: Yuanliu Chubanshe, 1983), 5.118. Ann Waltner notes a similar formulation by Fang Xianfu (d. 1544), who used it to take sides in the Great Ritual Controversy of the Shizong reign (1522–67). "The rituals established by the former kings had their origin in human emotions [*renqing*]." Ann Waltner, *Getting an Heir: Adoption and the Construction of Kinship in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 3, citing *Ming Shi*, 5186.

49 As Edward T. Ch'ien has noted, both Wang Yangming and Luo Qinshun "propounded an affirmative view of emotions as an inherent part of man's Nature." Edward T. Ch'ien, *Chiao Hung [Jiao Hong] and the Restructuring of Neo-Confucianism in the Late Ming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 228.

50 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 40.

51 And yet, Chen was not as radical as his students. As he commented to friends after deciding to renounce silk, he had worn it anyway only to please his mother.

Belief in geomancy ran strong in Guangdong. Thus we are not surprised to learn that Chen Xianzhang's grave had to be moved at least once, though no reason for the move is specified. "Baisha xiansheng gaizang mubei ming 白沙先生改葬墓碑名," in *Chen Xianzhang ji* 陳獻章集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju ed., 1987). For general background see Paul Yun-ming Jiang, *The Search for Mind: Ch'en Pai-sha [Baisha], Philosopher-Poet* (Kent Ridge: Singapore University Press, 1980). See also Jen Yu-wen [Jian youwen] 簡又文, *Baisha Zi yanjiu* 白沙子研究 (Hong Kong: Jicheng Tushu Gongsi, 1970).

Chen Xianzhang's foremost disciple was Zhan Ruoshui, who founded what, because of its bookishness, has been traditionally considered the conservative wing of later Ming thought. According to Zhan, the Principle of the things of the world was to be found in everything. Thus one could learn it from a bamboo plant, but one could also learn it from books.[52] As with his teacher Chen Xianzhang, Zhan's philosophical position is evidenced in his mourning practices.[53] He felt free enough, for example, to mourn his teacher Chen like a parent, for a full three-year period.[54]

Zhan Ruoshui, in his acceptance of book learning as a source of knowledge, deviated from the other school of thought that arose from Chen Xianzhang's thinking: the school of Wang Yangming. Wang's thought has been dealt with by a variety of writers.[55] Suffice it for our analysis to suggest that he was in many ways, when it came to his beliefs about rituals, a creature of his time. His principle of innate knowledge (*liangzhi* 良知) relied not at all on book learning, but on the sage's independent investigation of the things of the world.

For Wang, the rituals began in human nature, and one should not be absorbed in their punctilious performance, but should get to their spirit. "There are three hundred rules of canonical rites (*ching li* [*jingli* 經禮]) and three thousand additional rules of demeanor (*ch'u-li*) [*quli* 曲禮]). Not one of them is not based on humanity, not one of them is not based on human nature."[56] And Wang felt free to adapt the practices of the past to suit his own needs. When Zou Shouyi 鄒守益 (1491–1562), a major disciple of Wang's, wrote suggesting an alternative placement of the ancestral tablets, Wang responded with willingness to change the old practice. He noted to Zou, "Your adaptation has been found to be in harmony with human feelings, which is the best thing."[57]

52 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 40.

53 The most comprehensive studies of Zhan Roshui's work are by Shiga Ichiro 志賀一郎. See his *Tan Kansen no kyōiku* 湛甘泉の教育 (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1987); *Tan Kansen to O Yōmei no kankei* 湛甘泉と王陽明の關係 (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1985); and *Tan Kansen no gakusetsu* 湛甘泉の學説 (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1983).

54 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 36. Zhan was a student of the rites. In his work *Erli jingzhuan ce* 二禮經傳冊 he attempted to prove that the authentic text on rites was the *Decorum Rituals* (*Yi li* 儀禮), rather than the *Record of Rites*. *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 39. Some scholars believe the idea was originally Zhu Xi's. See Zhu's *Yi li jingzhuan tongjie* 儀禮經傳通解, *Siku tiyao* 22.26. For Zhan's memorials on the reformation of mourning rites, see his *Gewu tong* 格物通100卷 (Siku quanshu zhenben ed., 5), 135–41, 56.2a–b, 56.13b–14b.

55 To mention only a few: Qian Mu 錢穆, *Yangming xue shu yao* 陽明學述要 (Taibei: Zhengzhong Shuju ed., 1955); Julia Ching, *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yang-ming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); Araki Kengo 荒木見悟, *Yōmeigaku no kaiten to Bukkyō* 陽明學の開展と佛教 (Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 1984); Tu Wei-ming, *Neo-Confucian Thought in Action: Wang Yang-ming's Youth (1472–1509)* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976).

56 "Preface to the Annotated Edition of the Book of Rites," Julia Ching, trans., *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yang-ming* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1976), 202.

57 Wang Yang-ming, "To Tsou Ch'ien-chih [Zou Qianzhi]," Julia Ching, trans., *The Philosophical Letters of Wang Yang-ming* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1972), 98.

Emotion was to be the starting point for rituals, rather than the result of their proper observance. This reorientation had precedents in Chinese history. But the extent to which rituals became malleable in the late Ming had not been seen in China since Wei and Jin times.[58]

The new orientation with respect to rituals was not the province only of well-known philosophers like Wang Yangming. Ming "jottings" literature reveals that this new way of thinking was widespread among members of the elite. Many were coming to believe that rituals could be changed to make them better conform to emotions.

Xie Zhaozhe, whose jottings were introduced in the preceding chapter, noted that in the late sixteenth century it was not uncommon for students to mourn their teachers, and for friends to mourn their friends. Xie seems to have agreed with the practice, so long as the relationship was, in each case, a special one.

> Although for friends there is no mourning, this does not mean that they may not be mourned. Righteousness and grace do not wait for a reason. So as to the seventy disciples of Confucius, it was permissible for them to mourn their master as a father. And as to Guan [Zhong] and Bao [Shuya]; or Lei [Yi] and Chen [Zhong] [famous Chinese friends] it was permissible for them to mourn each other as brothers. And yet, this should not happen frequently. The precepts of our former kings must be observed. . . . Probably as to teachers and friends down to today, mourning out of grace and benevolence is rather rare.[59]

Such practices went against the dictates of the mourning canon, which had restricted mourning observances to blood relatives.[60] No matter how much a student felt for his teacher, or a friend for his friend, the relationship was not one which the mourning rules would countenance.

Such rules said a great deal about the norms of Chinese society, and about the relationships it considered most important. Though teachers and friends might be important in society, their roles were purely *inter vivos*; that they were to cease at death ensured their impermanence in the Chinese scheme of human relations. And yet the practices that Xie records explode that relationship. The rituals themselves became open to change, as

58 See Chapter 1, notes 24–26, and Yü Ying-shih, "Individualism and the Neo-Taoist Movement in Wei-Chin China," in *Individualism and Holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist Values*, Donald J. Munro, ed. (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1985); Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals*, 33; Richard B. Mather, trans., *A New Account of Tales of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), ch. 17.

59 Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛, *Wu za zu* 吾雜組, 16卷 (Beiji Xiaoshuo Daguan ed.), 14.4343–4.

60 For a Qing viewpoint see Wan Sitong 萬斯同, "Shi fu yi 師服議," *Huangchao jingshi wenbian*, 65.32a–33a.

perceptions of emotions, rather than texts themselves, became sources of authority.[61]

Xie's conception of mourning rituals fit well in a society in which relations between scholars and their teachers were growing more intense.[62] Mourning of friend for friend fit also the atmosphere of faction and fierce allegiances that characterized the late Ming period.[63]

Xie Zhaozhe's explication of the rules for the duration of mourning for parents is interesting for the ways it reveals the new currents of thought on mourning.

According to the ancient rituals, one would mourn for a father in the first degree, for a period of three years. And if one's father were living, one mourned for the mother no more deeply than second degree, for a full year. This in theory settled the boundary between heaven and earth, and rectified the position of male and female (*yang* and *yin*), measuring the affection between parent and child. But did it not too greatly lose equality? In the life of a child, after three years he may avoid the care of his mother and father. And yet the toilsome labor required of the mother is ten times more than that required of the father . . . Moreover, father and mother both mourning the eldest son in the second degree, for a period of three years, while the son mourns the mother for only a full year, is backwards beyond all belief. On this ritual there is no reliable information from the Three Dynasties Period, and whether or not it was trumped up by a Han dynasty scholar will never be known.[64] But the whole world has observed it, until our dynasty changed the rule that all parents should be mourned in the first degree, for a

61 The ancient ritual texts did show special regard for the position of teachers. According to the *Record of Rites*, "A teacher is served without blame for his faults, but also without concealment of them. From left and right he should be served without partiality, this service should continue to his death, after which he should be mourned in the heart for three years." *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 3.79. A modern note in the text defines "mourned in the heart" as "having the appearance and demeanor of mourning but without actually observing it." 3.80. The *Record of Rites* notes also that "at the death of Confucius, his disciples were unsure about how to mourn. Zi Gong said: 'In the past when the master [Confucius] mourned for Yan Hui, he mourned him as a son, but without wearing mourning clothes. When he mourned Zi Lu he did the same. So therefore when we mourn the Master, let us mourn him as a father but without mourning clothes.'" *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 3.110.

As for the mourning of friends, there is less written in the classics on this matter. Zeng Zi, a disciple of Confucius, is recorded in the *Record of Rites* as having said: "At the grave of a friend, live in a grass hut, but do not cry." 3.84. That text attributes the following statement to Confucius: "For a friend, I cry only outside his home." 3.103. For more on notions of friendship, see my "Dangerous Friendships in Late Imperial and Modern China," unpublished paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association, January 5, 1996.

62 Qian Dehong 錢德洪 and Wang Ji 王畿 both mourned their teacher Wang Yangming as a father, building a hut to live in near the grave and using the time to edit Wang's writings. *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 241.

63 See Heinrich Busch, "The Tung-lin [Donglin] Shu-yüan [Shuyuan] and Its Political and Philosophical Significance," *Monumenta Serica* 14:1–163 (1949–50). Charles O. Hucker, *The Censorial System of Ming China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966).

64 The Three Dynasties referred to the earliest dynasties in Chinese history, the Xia, Shang, and Zhou.

period of three years. . . . That which is obedient to heaven's reason, and which comprehends human emotion, though it may differ from the minutiae of the past, it is permissible.[65]

In the above passage Xie very openly derides texts as sources of authority on mourning rituals, and shifts his attention to what he perceives to be the purpose of the ritual. Confucius himself had speculated that a father was mourned for three years because that was the length of time a child needed intensive care from his parents.[66] But even Confucius, though he felt free to inquire into the rationale of the three-year rule, did not feel free to change it. But Xie operates completely differently. He spurns the text and finds the reasoning wanting. If, he argues, the rationale for three years of mourning was the amount of time the parents had to care intensely for the child, then why should the father be mourned more heavily than the mother, when the labor required of the mother during the child's early years was so much more intensive than that required of the father? And by what logic should parents be required to mourn the eldest son for three years?

Although Xie agrees with the policy of changing the rules, so that all parents are mourned for three years, it is the way in which he reaches that conclusion that is so characteristically late Ming. "That which is obedient to heaven's reason, and which comprehends human emotion; though it may differ from the minutiae of the past, it is permissible."

Xie's discussion reveals an understanding of the malleability of rites, a strong historical sense that rituals were not frozen in high antiquity but were part of a system that had changed over time and that continued to change. This was another salient feature of rites in the late Ming: those who wrote about them and practiced them did so with a greater sense of their transience and variability. People had always known that rituals changed, but not until the late Ming did this knowledge of change become so pervasively present in people's writings, and not until the late Ming was change without imperial imprimatur viewed as so possible.[67]

He Liangjun, a native of Huating 華亭, Jiangsu, and author of a 1573 collection of jottings, took an almost antiquarian interest in the fact that variation in rituals between north and south meant that what was considered *li* varied considerably, depending on one's geographical location.[68]

The ancients considered that the right was most honorable. [But] during middle antiquity (*zhonggu* 中古) the left was esteemed. . . . It is said that this is the case for funeral

65 *Wu za zu*, 14.4341–42.

66 "Confucius said: 'A child lives for three years before he can avoid his parents' care; it is for this reason that all observe a mourning period of three years.'" *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 38.930.

67 On change in pre-Ming rituals see Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals*, 35.

68 See *Siku tiyao*, p. 2677, which records that he was a clerk (*kongmu* 孔目) in the Hanlin Academy.

rituals. Now whenever anyone holds a banquet, when performing the rituals of bowing, yielding, making obeisance, and kneeling, all consider that the left side is esteemed, without doubt.

Today the rituals observed in the North and in the South are different from each other. Whenever guests arrive and face their hosts both bow. In the South the host permits his guest to stay on the east side. This is the right hand. In the North the host permits his guest to stay on the west side. This is the left hand. It is true that people are strange, and yet the North and South are different, and really no one investigates the origins of these differences.[69]

The late Ming was a time in which improved communications led scholars to see the heterogeneity in a system of rituals that was supposed to have followed a single line of orthodox transmission. Such variations revealed the transient qualities of orthodoxy itself. If, historically, there had been different senses of what orthodoxy comprised, if what was "correct" was truly variable, then how could there exist absolute standards of orthodoxy in the present?

Lang Ying 郎瑛 (b. 1487), another author of jottings, also noticed the variations in rituals. But he took the argument farther than He Liangjun, recognizing not only the variability of rituals, but also the superiority of rituals as practiced by non-Han peoples.

All people have funerals. And yet the ancients' funerals were not like those of today, and those of China are not like those of other places. Why is this? Funerals of today, though they might be elaborate in the extreme, not one item [of value] is buried with the deceased. In funerals of ancient times, the mourners frequently buried articles of precious metal, jade, and bronze with the dead; certainly these would be found by later people, who would despoil their bones, and down to this day this still occurs. How sad!

[Han] Chinese graves are tree-lined and covered with dirt. One glimpse of their plantings and buildings and one knows them.[70] But in the case of foreigners' (*huren* 胡人) they are flatter to the ground.[71] When you see them, you still know there is a grave there. But after a while [even the descendant's] children and grandchildren do not know the location. And after a long time it looks just like the rest of the ground, and how could anyone find them to dig them up?[72]

Lang begins with the assertion that what separates funerals of his time from funerals of "the ancients" was the fact that the doctrine of *xunzang* 殉葬, or burying valuables or even live human beings with the deceased was no longer

69 He Liangjun 何良俊, *Siyouzhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, 1573 38卷 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1983), 34.310–11.

70 See Figure 3. Drawn by W. Alexander, source unknown. I am indebted to Richard Wallach for locating this.

71 The term for foreigner here, *huren*, can refer either generally to foreign people or specifically to the nomadic Mongols and Turkic peoples in the North.

72 Lang Ying (b. 1487) 郎瑛, *Qixiu leigao* 七脩類稿, 51卷 (Taibei: Shijie Shuju ed., 1963), 16.229.

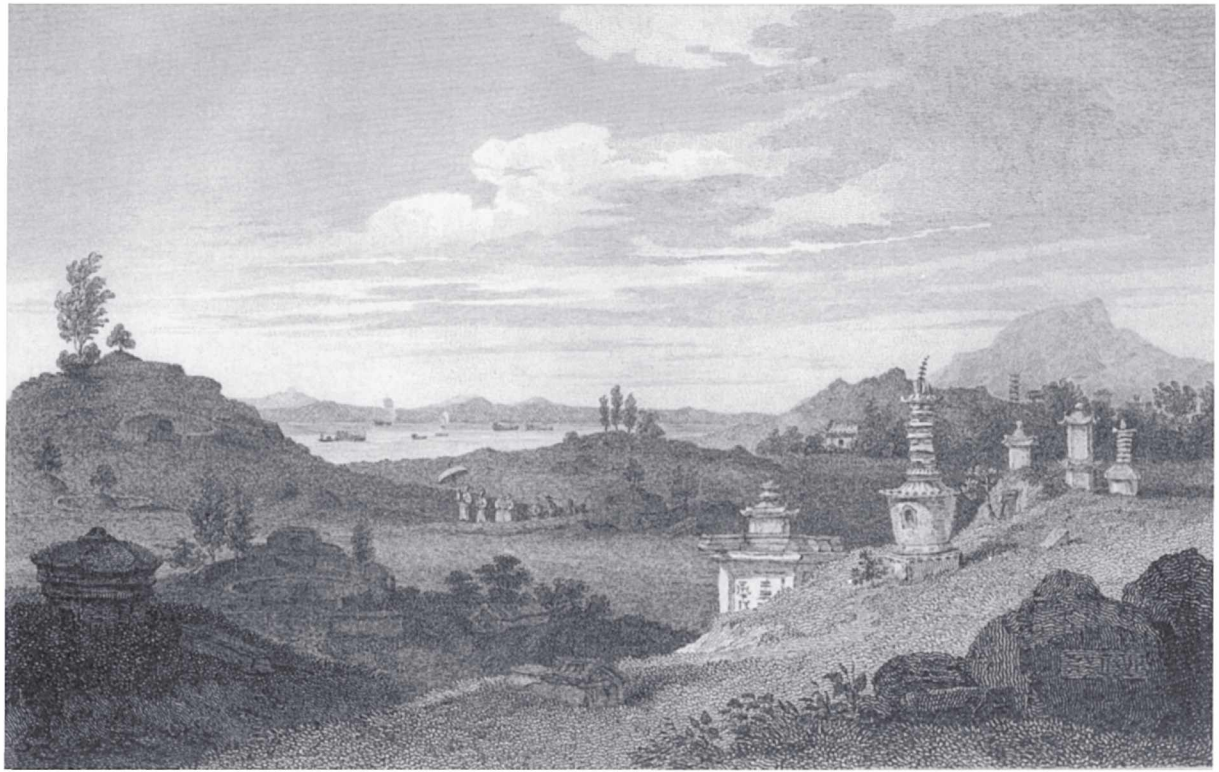

Figure 3. Burial grounds near the Yellow River. Etching. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees & Orne, 1810.

observed.[73] He, like the other writers just quoted, is struck by the changeability of the rituals. And yet by implication he goes farther. If burying actual articles of value with the dead is closer to the ancient practices, then perhaps the burial practices of non-Chinese people were superior, because their locations would in time become invisible to all but those who had taken careful notice. Though Lang maintains a degree of vagueness in his writing, it is clear that he feels at the very least that had the ancients not adapted the practice of having conspicuous graves, the peace of their ancestors would have gone unmolested.

Once the variety of ritual practice became apparent to Ming elites, it became fashionable for them to use mourning and funerary rituals as a means of delineating the characteristics of Han Chineseness. In the *Ming History*, for example, which was written by late Ming intellectuals after the fall of the dynasty, non-Han places typically are characterized by their methods for disposal of the dead, and by their mourning customs. In each case, the varying rituals of the non-Han are filtered through Han lenses, in an implied comparison in which the Han rituals are taken as superior. For example, the *Ming History* notes that in Cambodia the dead were not buried but were left out in the wild to be eaten by vultures.

> When someone dies the mourners put the corpse in the wild and the vultures devour it. The mourners consider it good fortune if the dead are eaten quickly. When [a man] goes into mourning he cuts his hair. When a woman goes into mourning she cuts a portion of her hair the size of a coin. Both do this to repay their parents.[74]

Here, the comparison is between the implied barbaric disposal of the corpse by ingestion and Confucian requirements that it be buried inviolate. The text also implicitly compares the simplicity of Cambodian customs with the more complex, and by implication superior, Confucian rites.

Once the proper performance of the rituals became the defining characteristic of Han-ness, it became easy, and indeed necessary, for Han Chinese to change those practices that conflicted with their changing image of what it meant to be Han. The sense that there was something indecorous about how

73 Note, though, that the practice would again be observed in the early part of the Qing dynasty. See note 56, Chapter 1.

74 *Ming shi*, 8395. For similar formulations, see descriptions of the state of Roufo 柔佛 in southern Malaysia. Here married women would trim their hair when in mourning, and the men would have their heads shaved. All the dead were cremated. Ibid., 8428. Note also the description of a place called Ha Lie 哈烈. Here they observed a mourning period of one hundred days. The body was not buried in a coffin, but was buried wrapped in cloth. There was no ancestor worship, only worship of the sky. On the location of Ha Lie, see Zhang Qiyun 張其昀 et al., *Zhongwen da cidian* 中文大辭典 (Taibei: Zhongguo Wenhua Yanjiusuo, 1962–68), 3703.53.

a rite was performed, no matter how orthodox that rite might be, thus operated as a deterrent to the practice of that rite.[75]

The decline in the use of demon quellers (*fangxiang* 方相) is a conspicuous example of this phenomenon. These were men dressed in costume, with a second pair of eyes painted on their faces. (See Figure 4.) Their use was mandated in *Family Rituals*, as well as in earlier texts.[76] Demon quellers danced at the front of funeral processions to clear the path for the mourners, and their incorporation into orthodox practice represented an instance in which popular culture was so pervasive that it had to be accepted by mainstream orthodoxy.[77]

In the beginning of the Ming dynasty the use of demon quellers was observed, and the editors of the *Ming History* were careful to write that at the funerals of Hongwu and his officials, demon quellers were used according to the rank of the deceased.[78] But by the end of the Ming there was such opposition to the use of demon quellers that even when they were used, it was with only their normal eyes, rather than with four painted eyes. Zhu Guozhen, writing only a little more than twenty years before the fall of the Ming, noted the pervasive distaste for demon quellers as well as the fact that at funerals for higher-level officials two-eyed ones were used.

> These days when great officials (*dachen* 大臣) are taken to the grave their dignity of demeanor (*weiyi* 威儀) may be considered to be of the utmost. But there is one inferior thing. It is the presence of demon quellers dancing about at the head of the procession, clearing the way. Those for officials grade four and above are supposed to have four eyes, but the ones I have seen have only two eyes. Probably this is a small matter.[79]

In antiquity demon quellers were an important part of popular culture, so important in fact that they could not be ignored by elite culture in its composition of the mourning canon. The next stage in the life of demon quellers was co-optation: the government regulated their use, in an attempt to make them serve its own purposes. Since they appeared at the head of funeral processions, varying them according to the rank of the deceased would make funeral processions distinguishable at first glance, adding to the prestige of higher-ranked officials.

75 For contemporary studies of changing sensibilities see Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*, Edmund Jephcott, trans. (New York: Urizen Books, 1978), especially vol. 2: *Power and Civility*; and Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: A History of the Modern Sensibility* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), especially the introduction.

76 *Family Rituals* (Ebrey), 116; *Jia li* (Siku ed.), 142.560.

77 See the following sources for notes on demon quellers: *Zhou li jinzhu jinyi*, 7.314–15; *Zhou li ji shuo* 周禮集説10卷, Siku Quanshu Zhenben #4, vols. 43–45 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed.), 7.18b–19a.

78 *Zui wei lu*, 7.686.

79 Zhu Guozhen 朱國禎, *Yongchuang xiaopin* 湧幢小品, 1621 32卷 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1959), 6.134.

Figure 4. Demon quellers (*fangxiang*). Although use of these men was once considered orthodox, by the end of the Ming dynasty they had all but disappeared. From the collection *San li tu*, published in 1176.

By the late Ming demon quellers were losing their appeal, as their presence offended new notions of sensibility. Demon quellers ultimately went completely out of fashion – the engraving in Figure 5 shows employees of funeral specialists at the front of the procession: demurely carrying placards bearing advertisements for their establishment.

Before leaving the general topic of late Ming society, it is worth pausing to consider the writings of Guan Zhidao 管志道 (1536–1608), who commented extensively on rituals as they were practiced in the environs of his hometown, in Kunshan 崑山, Jiangsu. While his observations cannot be generalized to all China, they do contain arresting detail on the practices of some Jiangnan elites. And because Kunshan was one of the leading centers for the production of successful examination candidates, studying it can reveal much about the ritual lives of many officials.

Not surprisingly, Guan Zhidao frequently mentions the role of emotion in determining how rituals should be practiced. He defends using emotion to determine how rituals are performed by referring to the well-known passage from the *Analects* that "in mourning it is better that there be mournfulness than a minute attention to detail."[80] In further defending the preference for considering emotion, Guan said, "Mournfulness resides in the heart-and-mind (*xin* 心) of sons, ritual cannot contain it."[81] He used an argument from emotion to ground his position on "hastening to mourn (*bensang*)."[82]

Another notable feature of Guan Zhidao's writings is his frequent reference to the innovations and rules of Hongwu, the first Ming emperor. These demonstrate that the rules promulgated by Hongwu had remained important enough by the late sixteenth century for Guan Zhidao to take cognizance of them. He refers back, for example, to Hongwu's changing the rules of mourning for mothers, his prohibitions on music, and his rules on *bensang*.[83]

What is perhaps most intriguing about Guan Zhidao's observations is that they often discuss Hongwu in connection with the role of emotion. Frequently, for example, Guan argues that although an innovation of Hongwu's is without textual authority, it nonetheless comports with the requirements of human emotion. For example, Guan notes that a text entitled *Mourning Rituals for Officials and Commoners* promulgated by Hongwu had abridged considerably the requirements set out in the *Decorum Rituals* (*Yi li*), and yet the parts that remained "conformed to human emotion."[84] He also notes that Hongwu's

80 Guan Zhidao 管志道, *Cong xian weisu yi* 從先維俗議, 1602 5卷 in *Taikun xianzhe yishu* 太崑先哲遺書 (Gest Oriental Library, 9110.28/4321, pt. 1, vols. 1–8), 3.101a.
81 Guan Zhidao, 3.101a.
82 Guan Zhidao, 3.111a et seq.
83 Guan Zhidao, 1.82a, 3.109a, 3.111a.
84 Guan Zhidao, 3.101b.

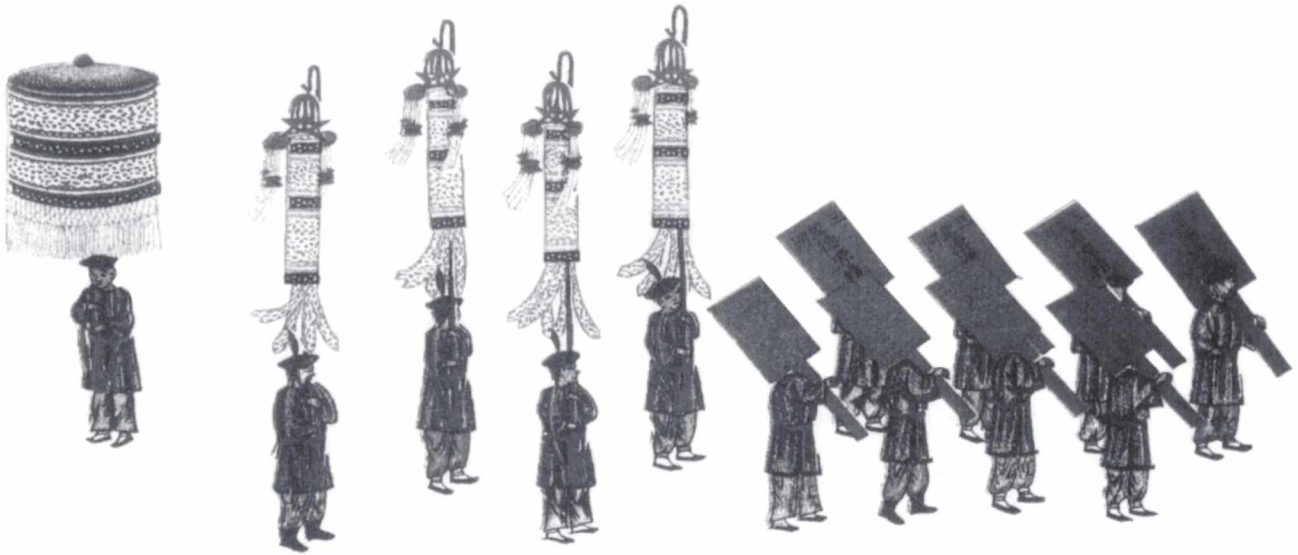

Figure 5. Head of a Peking funeral procession, c. 1810. Adapted by the author from Louise Crane, *China in Sign and Symbol* (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, 1926).

changes to the rules of "hastening to mourn (*bensang*)" were not in accord with the *Decorum Rituals*, but did meet the demands of human emotion.[85]

This connection is so intriguing because it raises the question of how much Hongwu's changes to mourning were responsible for the emphasis on emotion in the late Ming. While there was certainly a general preoccupation with emotion among elites in the late Ming, it well might not have entered the world of ritual without Hongwu. In a sense, the first Ming emperor's actions facilitated the new mood by adulterating the textual authority for ritual observances. Hongwu's texts that dealt with mourning, such as *The Record of Filial Piety and Benevolence* (discussed earlier), showed little regard for textual authority, and instead emphasized what emotions were natural. Thus, instead of a more authoritative source on rituals, there were simply more sources. A late Ming thinker such as Guan Zhidao would, moreover, have to make the difficult choice between contradicting the founding emperor's rules and contradicting those presented in a canonical text – a dilemma reflected in the title of his work.[86] When Guan faced this dilemma, he generally sided with the emperor.

Guan Zhidao's observations also echo many of the general features of mourning discussed in Chapter 1. Lavish funerals were very prevalent in the society, as was geomancy. Extravagances were evident in such practices as hiring a distinguished scholar to write the tomb inscription.[87] They were also evident in the grand entertainments held at funerals, complete with plays and music.[88]

Thus, Guan discusses the fact that burials in his area generally took place after three months, even though a delay of that length was supposed to be reserved for high officials, according to canonical texts. This three-month period Guan found to "accord with emotion and reason," since it provided time for land to be obtained and a date to be set. But Guan also lamented that geomancers (*xingjia* 形家) and fortune-tellers (*rijia* 日家) had so beguiled the gentry that burials in his area might be delayed as long as ten years.[89]

The effect of geomancy was also evident in the fact that grave sites might be hundreds of *li* from the home of the bereaved. This meant that the sacrifice of repose (discussed in the preceding chapter) could not be performed on the day of interment, because it was impossible for the mourners to reach home fast enough. The compromise embraced by many families was the performance of several sacrifices of repose – one or two en route, and the third at the home.[90]

85 Guan Zhidao, 3.111a. He also refers to Hongwu's changes in rules for mourning mothers as "in accord with emotion."
86 "Congxian" is both a reference to a quotation from the *Analects*, and to the founding emperor.
87 Guan Zhidao, 3.104b. The price for such an honor was up to 100,000 cash.
88 Guan Zhidao, 3.109a.
89 Guan Zhidao, 3.103a–b.
90 Guan Zhidao, 3.105b–6b.

The problem of *duoqing* in the late Ming

It is difficult to obtain information on most cases of *duoqing* from the Ming. Archival evidence of the kind available for the Qing is not available.[91] The standard sources, such as the *Ming History* and the *Ming Veritable Records*, usually give only cursory information on incidents of *duoqing* and observance of mourning. Nevertheless, if the *Ming History* is taken as a rough guide, the Ming will be revealed as a time when mourning leaves were largely observed.

A chart contained in the *Ming History* entitled "Year-chart of Steward-Bulwarks of State" lists the three or four seniormost officials in the Ming government year by year. The data contained in this chart is based solely on the individual biographies of these officials published elsewhere in the same work, and so is incomplete. There are also inconsistencies in the chart that the *Ming History* itself notices, and disagreements with data in the *Ming Veritable Records*.[92] Nevertheless it is worth noting that this chart shows thirteen such officials observing mourning, and only two being ordered to *duoqing*.

A study of instances of *duoqing* mentioned in the *Ming History* likewise suggests that for the most part, instances of suspended mourning during the Ming generally took place under color of the military exception.[93] Officials were generally called back from mourning to deal with military situations.[94] In several instances, however, this was extended to other situations of emergency,

91 One reliable source of Ming memorials is the collection *Huang Ming tiaofa shi lei zuan* 皇明條法事類纂, originally entitled *Wenxing Tiaoli* 文刑條例 and published under the auspices of the Hongzhi Emperor. The documents contained in this work were held in the Censorate, where they were copied by the censor Dai Jin 戴金. Dai Jin, ed., *Huang Ming tiaofa shi lei zuan*, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku, 1966).

Documents in this collection demonstrate that the Ming government of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was fairly vigilant in ensuring that *duoqing* was avoided and proper mourning observed – although the fact that the documents were retained by the censorate may of course suggest bias in reporting. In 1468, for example, a memorialist noted that some lower-level officials were surreptitiously avoiding mourning with the help of their seniors. The Chenghua 成化 Emperor (r. 1465–88) responded: "If the cases you mention are really occurring these must be looked into." And *duoqing* was strictly prohibited. *Huang Ming tiaofa shi lei zuan*, 上.566–67. Officials who left their posts by trumping up a parent's death, or who hid a parent's death to avoid mourning, were punished. Ibid., 上.5, 上.544, 上.571.

92 For examples compare *Ming Xianzong shilu* 明憲宗實錄 293卷 (Taibei: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan, 1962), 223.3a, with *Ming shi* 177, 181 (error in case of Liu Ji 劉吉); and *Ming Yingzong shilu* 明英宗實錄 361卷 (Taibei: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan, 1962) 229.5a, with *Ming shi* 147 (error in case of Wang Wen 王文).

93 With the help of the Dynastic Histories Database at the University of Washington I was able to obtain a list of every mention of mourning and *duoqing* in the *Ming History*. My sincere thanks go to Ms. Yen-mei Wu, who searched the database on my behalf.

94 *Ming shi*, 4138–39 (case of Yang Rong 楊榮 helping Jianwen Emperor in northern campaigns); ibid., 4357 (Wei Yuan 魏源 required to assist Yongle Emperor in campaigns against "Liangzhou Bandits [Liangzhou tukou 涼州土寇]"); ibid., 5986 (case of Li Hualong 李化龍).

such as famine relief.[95] If the official was not a military official, but was assisting in a military effort or campaign, the exception could apply.[96]

Most important, in the Ming *duoqing* meant the shortening, not the complete forgoing, of mourning. In all instances in which that information is given, the officials in question were permitted to attend the burial and remain at home for a period of months before returning to their posts. The well-known instance in which even a leave to perform the burial was not permitted, but was then later granted, was that of Zhang Juzheng 張居正, discussed below.

Instances of *duoqing* discussed in the *Ming History* also reveal that it was uniformly requested by the emperor. The parallel conception of society demanded no less, because matters of filial piety were between parent and child, and between minister and emperor. In one case, the *Ming History* notes that an official was requested to *duoqing* at the instance of another official. In this case, however, the official refused, and the emperor did not punish him for doing so.[97]

The foregoing is not intended as a statistical portrayal of the incidence and nature of *duoqing* in the Ming. The raw material for such a portrayal is simply not available.[98] Instead, a highly revealing view of mourning can be had from an examination of two well-known cases of *duoqing* in the Ming. The cases were similar in many ways. Both involved very high level officials (in each case they were Grand Secretaries) and both took place during a time when there were no threats to national security that would justify the military exception.

Differences between these two cases, however, provide important clues to changing Ming attitudes. Arguments against *duoqing* in the earlier case were made in the context of the parallel conception of society, and in general revealed a truer knowledge of what canonical texts on mourning required. Arguments against *duoqing* in the later instance actually contradicted the parallel conception of society.

The first case occurred in April 1466, when Grand Secretary Li Xian 李賢 (1408–67), under imperial orders, hurried home to bury his father, but then

95 *Ming shi*, 147 (Wang Wen 王文 returned from mourning to assist with famine relief); ibid., 177 (Liu Ji 劉吉 [1427–97] cut short mourning due to starvation among the people). Liu Ji's case receives extensive treatment in the *Ming shilu*. He was permitted to return to his home for the funeral, but the emperor wanted him to return immediately thereafter. See *Ming Xianzong shilu*, 223.3b–4a, 223.4b–5a. Although Liu Ji was being retained for famine relief, many censors thought this was insufficient reason to return him to his post. Liu Ji himself begged to return, using the argument of the parallel conception of society. The emperor responded: "My minister should return and serve me; this too is filial piety." Ibid., 223.5a.

96 *Ming shi*, 4582 (case of Yang Ning 楊寧).

97 *Ming shi*, 7171 (case of He Tengjiao 何騰蛟).

98 Some obvious sources, chronological biographies that document a man's life year by year (*nianpu*), are available for only a relatively small number of Ming officials. Charts like those compiled separately and those printed in the dynastic histories (such as *zaifu nianbiao* 宰輔年表) are based on data from dynastic history biographies and the *Veritable Records*, which are incomplete.

returned immediately to the capital without observing the customary rules of mourning.[99] Although the case caused a considerable uproar, no voice was as loud, or as clear in its condemnation of the action, as that of Luo Lun 羅倫 (1431–78).

Luo's father was an obscure scholar whose best efforts could not support his family. At age thirteen Luo began to help the family by tutoring other local boys. In 1463, when Luo was thirty-two, he sat for the *jinshi* examination, and although the hall caught fire, killing ninety candidates, he was able to escape. During the same examination his father died, and when Luo received the news he had to leave the examination to hurry home to begin mourning. Three years later, at the conclusion of the mourning period, he passed the examination in first place.[100] He was appointed a Hanlin Compiler, and it was in that very same year that he urged Li Xian to observe the proper mourning period for his father.[101] When that failed, Luo submitted a memorial of almost three thousand characters petitioning the emperor to send Li Xian home to observe mourning.[102]

Luo's memorial demonstrates the circumstances under which *duoqing* might take place in the middle Ming period. Luo is careful to point out that the emperor, in ordering Li to curtail his mourning, did so on the grounds of the "military exception (*jin'ge zhi shi* 金革之事)" to the mourning requirement, though there were no grounds for the exception to operate. Although Li had served in posts in the Board of War, and had been wounded in the coup attempt by Cao Qin 曹欽 in 1466, there was no basis for arguing that he was subject to the military exception.[103] "If the emperor has for reasons of military exigency caused [Li] Xian to return to office, then [Li Xian himself] is unaware of such exigencies. And if great officials are summoned back from their mourning, then the *li* is nowhere to be found."[104]

99 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 821. *Ming shi*, 4747. *Ming hui yao* 明會要, 18.302–03.

100 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 984.

101 *Ming hui yao*, 18.302. The sources are considerably vague about the role of the Chenghua emperor in this instance of *duoqing*. If we assume, as the sources lead us to, that Li Xian practiced *duoqing* at the emperor's insistence (*Dictionary of Ming Biography* reports that the emperor sent eunuchs to ensure his speedy return), then we are left wondering why Luo Lun directed his criticism first at Li Xian. Both the *Ming hui yao* and *Ming shi* report that Lo Lun "paid [Li] Xian a visit, to get him to [observe mourning], but [Li Xian] paid no heed." *Ming hui yao*, 18.302; *Ming shi*, 178.4747. One supposes that Luo Lun sought to make clear that he was not motivated by political concerns, and so approached Li Xian personally. One also supposes that Li Xian played a role in curtailing his own mourning. The question is not a purely pedantic one. If the atmosphere of the time was truly against a high official practicing *duoqing* in a time of peace, then an emperor would be unlikely to suggest it, absent some suggestion of willingness by the official.

102 Numerous discrepancies appear between the version of the memorial as reprinted in the *Ming shi* and Luo Lun's *wenji*. I have chosen to rely on the *wenji*'s 2,960 character version because of its apparent completeness.

103 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 821, 1298–99.

104 Lo Lun 羅倫, *Yifeng wenji* 一峰文集 (Siku quanshu zhenben ed., 4), vols. 337–38, 1.25b.

Li's status was also important. The memorial makes clear that *duoqing* was especially to be avoided in the case of very high level officials. Because of their high status their power as exemplar and moral responsibility was also paramount. This element is common to both Ming cases of *duoqing*: that both were top officials in the government made their *duoqing* more offensive in the eyes of their critics. In the Qing, as we shall see, the assumption was reversed. The highest-level officials were most powerful and considered most important to the empire, and so their *duoqing* was considered more excusable.

The Ming cases of *duoqing*, and in particular the earlier case involving Li Xian, still operate under the parallel conception of society that was so important to Hongwu. In Luo Lun's memorial, it is that image of the society that gives the lengthy memorial its greatest eloquence, and its overarching organization. Luo argues that it was a mistake for the emperor to believe that making his ministers forgo their mourning would make them more loyal to him. On the contrary, by cultivating loyalty to their parents they would simultaneously be cultivating loyalty to the throne.

> For this reason the ancient kings set the regulations of the *li*, ordaining that sons observe mourning for their parents. The ruler would order that for three years the minister not enter the gates of the palace, and it was in this way that the ruler would instruct the minister in filial piety. The ancient kings wanted loyalty (*zhong* 忠). Officials must be sincere when they are in mourning. In this way their loyalty can be transposed to the ruler 故忠可移於君. As to both common people and officials, it has not been possible for them to be unfilial to a relative and yet loyal to their ruler. And as to rulers there are none who do not instruct their ministers in filial piety, and yet are able to obtain their loyalty.[105]

The parallel conception was so central to Luo that he twice reiterated it in his memorial.[106] In his mind-set it involved the relationship not only between ruler and minister but also between people and ministers and people and rulers.

The other major case of *duoqing* in the Ming occurred in 1577, when the father of Chief Grand Secretary Zhang Juzheng died. There is considerable debate among historians over Zhang's own role in bringing about his *duoqing*. He was the closest advisor to the fourteen-year-old Wanli Emperor, so many assumed that Zhang had actually convinced the emperor to deny him permission to return for mourning.[107] Zhang's own side of the story, as told best in the

105 Luo Lun, 1.25a–b.

106 He does so again on page 1.26b, and on pages 1.31b–32a, where he writes, "who could be happy at the thought of unfilial sons, when it would make them disloyal officials? The constant obligations of morality rectify human relations, enlighten customs, broaden the hearts of officials, purify the rules, and set forth the strength of the nation; and this they do all at once."

107 The *Ming shi* suggests that a vice-minister in the Board of Revenue, Li Youzi 李幼孜, sought to flatter Zhang, and so suggested that *duoqing* be permitted. *Ming shi* 213.5647. The jottings *Guo que*, cited in the first part of this chapter, suggests that Lü Tiaoyang (1516–80) was in line to become Chief Grand Secretary, and that this prospect infuriated Zhang, who sought

court diary, reveals instead a minister who is desperate to return home and perform his filial duties, but who is stopped from doing so by the order of his emperor.[108]

The conflicting versions of the story – the filial minister who is following orders, versus the evil minister who engineers his own *duoqing* – suggest the growing factionalism between the groups that have traditionally been termed the "good" and "bad" elements, at the end of the Ming dynasty. And yet if we look more deeply into the case and compare it with that of Li Xian more than a hundred years earlier, we see some important differences. In the time of Li Xian, the rules of *duoqing*, and what constituted viable exceptions to the rules, applied to the emperor as well as his ministers. That is, the emperor's desire to have his minister remain at court would be insufficient in the discourse of official documents. Thus debate turned, in the case of Li Xian, not on the wishes of the emperor but on the military situation of the empire. But in the case of Zhang Juzheng, the ethics of the situation turned on whether Zhang had arranged the *duoqing* himself.[109]

Other conspicuous differences between the two cases relate to questions of degree: the *duoqing* sought in the later case was in several ways more extreme than that of the earlier case. *Duoqing* meant literally the "cutting short" of emotions, and in its typical traditional usage would mean the recall of an official to meet a pressing military need. The case of Li Xian was one step removed from this, and for him that meant the shortening of the mourning period to burial alone. But in the case of Zhang Juzheng the sources make it clear that the emperor (propelled or not by Zhang) intended to retain his minister without even the shortest leave; and it was only after Li submitted several urgent memorials that he was permitted to return home for the burial.[110]

because of it to avoid mourning. *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 1014. The *Ming shu* likewise accuses Zhang of engineering the plan, but also blames Lü Tiaoyang for not taking up Zhang's duties quickly enough. 150.15b.

108 *Wanli qijuzhu* 萬曆起居注 (Beijing Daxue Chubanshe ed., 1988), 1.492–516. Zhang's editorship of the *Diaries* assures that they tell the story as he intended it. His memorials are also reprinted in his chronological biography. See Yang Duo 楊鐸, *Zhang Jiangling nianpu* 張江陵年譜 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1938), 55–60.

109 Zhang acted out the dilemma he faced. For him the question was not the criteria of the military exception, but the wishes of the emperor versus the complaints of his critics. When Wang Xijue (1534–1610) visited him, and urged him to observe the proper mourning, he answered: "The Emperor forces me to stay, and you try to force me to go." Then he knelt down and made gestures of cutting his throat. "You kill me, you kill me," he repeated. *Ming shu*, 150.16b–17a. Zhang Juzheng himself suggested that Luo Lun had been ridiculous in suggesting to the emperor that there was no military exigency at the time, when all knew it was an excuse anyway. Ibid., 150.17b–18a.

110 The emperor's rescript on Zhang's second memorial requesting leave reads in part "as to discussing leave for a number of days, I cannot even think of being without him for one." *Wanli qijuzhu*, 1.499.

As Robert Crawford has suggested in his study of Zhang Juzheng, there were many Legalist aspects to Zhang's thought, and yet he is best termed an "imperial Confucianist" who borrowed from Confucianism, Legalism, Daoism, and Buddhism. "The end result was a philosophy Confucian in principle and Legalist in application."[111] Although we may not be able to reveal Zhang's own role in bringing about *duoqing*, we can draw several tentative conclusions from his philosophical position. As one who believed that the government should be run on Legalist principles, he rejected the parallel conception of society in favor of the absolute power of the emperor.[112]

Zhang, as part of this viewpoint, believed that ritual was simply not that important, and this outlook was reflected in the emperor's orders. Thus a "compromise" was arranged by which people were sent to handle the funeral arrangements on Zhang's behalf. Zhang's son, the Junior Compiler Zhang Sixiu 張嗣修, and the eunuch Director of Ceremonial Wei Chao 魏朝 were sent to take Zhang's place as chief mourner.[113] Flagrant actions such as these infuriated Zhang's critics. Zhao Yongxian 趙用賢 (1535–96), one of Zhang's harshest critics, wrote in a memorial to the emperor: "Am I foolish to blame Zhang Juzheng for being able to spend years in loyal service to the Emperor but not one day in devotion to his father?"[114] Heaven itself, and the common people, displayed their displeasure. A comet arose from the southeast, and crossed the sky, and the common people posted placards in the streets.[115]

Zhang's belief in the absolute demands of loyalty, and the almost complementary unimportance of ritual, became evident early in 1578 when the emperor's wedding took place. Weddings were auspicious events, and Zhang should have been forbidden to attend. Yet not only did he choose to attend, he also chose to change out of his somber, unadorned robes and into festive attire. This was something, the sources suggest, that Zhang did totally autonomously, despite the advice of the emperor's mother. She sent a eunuch to discuss the matter with him, and he responded: "Making a mother of the empire is a great affair of state. What is more important?"[116]

Zhang's critics were dealt with extremely harshly. Overall there were nine

111 Robert B. Crawford, "The Life and Thought of Chang Chü-cheng, 1525–1582" (unpublished dissertation, University of Washington, 1961), 215.

112 Zhang states the absolute duty of the minister to the ruler in a 1577 memorial. "As to the relationship between ruler and minister, if the ruler desires his death then he is to die, if he desires his life then he is to live." *Wanli qijuzhu*, 1.498.

113 Cao Gao 曹誥, a Secretary in the Board of Rites, was sent to direct the funeral sacrifices, and Xu Yingpin 徐應聘, a Secretary in the Board of Works, was sent to direct the funeral. *Ming shi*, 5647.

114 *Ming shi*, 6000.

115 *Ming shi*, 5647.

116 Cited in Crawford, 192n.136.

who opposed him.[117] Zhao Yongxian and Wu Zhongxing were cashiered, and given sixty blows of the heavy bamboo. Ai Mu and Shen Sixiao were each given eighty blows and banishment. The worst was Zou Yuanbiao, who criticized not only the practice of *duoqing* but also Zhang's record in office. He was given a hundred blows (the maximum penalty) and sent to serve as a soldier among the aborigines of Guizhou. After the beating a palm-sized heap of flesh was cleaned from his body: his wife preserved it as an example to his heirs.[118]

The case of Zhang Juzheng has been viewed as a watershed in late Ming history. As John Meskill remarked, after summarizing different scholars' views on the period, "from the parties in the dispute grew the factions that continued to fight to the end of the dynasty."[119] The event distinguished the "good" and "bad" elements. For people who took the *li* seriously, Zhang's *duoqing* was an action they morally could not abide. Even Zhang Han, who had been considered a lackey of Zhang Juzheng's, and who had received special favors from him, could not support the Grand Secretary's actions in avoiding the duties of mourning.[120] These people, the good elements, feared the long-term moral consequences to the state of an action that seemed on its face so inconsequential, and yet was in flagrant violation of the Confucian *li*. But even those who argued for the importance of tradition were less traditional than their counterparts in the time of Li Xian.

The nature of Ming decadence

The assumption behind the parallel conception of society was that filial emperors who paid scrupulous attention to the rituals would create an atmosphere in which filial norms were preserved, and in which the people and officials were loyal to him. Court documents for official perusal, such as the *Collected Ming Institutions*, recorded ritual practices that were supposed to be observed by those throughout the society, from emperor to commoner. In elegant simplicity, the passage below describes the moments following death and the arrival of condolence visitors.

> At the moment of death the announcement is sent to relatives and close friends. The condolence callers arrive. Dear friends and close relatives enter in tears; they lean over the corpse and express their grief, then go forward and make obeisance to the spirit

117 They were Wang Xijue 王錫爵, Zou Yuanbiao 鄒元標, Zhang Han 張瀚, Zhao Yongxian 趙用賢, Wu Zhongxing 吳中行, Zhang Wei 張位, Ai Mu 艾穆, and Shen Sixiao 深思孝.

118 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 138–39, 1312.

119 John Meskill, "Academies and Politics in the Ming Dynasty," in Charles O. Hucker, ed., *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 165.

120 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 73.

tablet. They offer incense and make a second obeisance. Then they offer condolences to the chief mourner. They cry especially loudly to each other, then the assembled mourners all cry facing each other [i.e., the callers] without speaking.

When the condolence callers present offerings of gifts or contributions toward funeral expenses, each must have its proper form. The secretaries must carefully record amounts and names. The chief mourner lights a fire and burns candles.

As to the feast, all mourners cry while waiting for it. The secretaries go out to meet the guests. The guests enter the feasting room, and bow and say: "When I heard that Mr. so-and-so passed away, I was unable to recover myself, and was shocked and grief-stricken. May I dare to come in and pour out libations, so that together in consolation we may observe the rites?"

The secretaries then lead the guests into the room, and in front of the spirit tablet they cry and express their grief. Then they make obeisance again, kneel, and pour out a libation. They prostrate themselves and rise. The secretaries, while standing on the right side of the guests, stop people from crying and kneel to read the prayers (*jiwen* 祭文) brought by payers of condolence calls. When this is completed, they rise. The head guests cry anew and express their grief, and the guests bow again. Then the chief mourner cries and goes out. From the west they kowtow and bow again. The guests now also cry, and from the east respond with a bow. Standing up, they say: "I cannot accept the death of my such-and-such relative, or of the official Mr. so-and-so, who has so suddenly died. I bow down to consider my grief and longing, [wondering] how I can endure such emptiness." The chief mourner responds to them: "My guilt and traitorousness is deep and severe, that I have invited calamity onto my such-and-such relative." Bowing, he pours out a libation and offers comfort, unable to bear his grief. Then he bows yet again, and the guests respond with an obeisance. Then the guests comfort the chief mourner by saying "whether life is long or short [this is a matter of fate], and this poisonous grief, what can we do about it?" Then they focus on some filial thoughts, and bow in accordance with the ritual regulations. Then they bow and go out. The chief mourner cries and enters. The secretaries send the guests off into the hall for tea and soup. Then the chief mourner and others cease crying.[121]

And yet from the bottom to the top of late Ming society, this picture of an ordered, filial devotion was at best inexact. In the case of emperors, Hongwu's punctilious observation of the rituals could not be matched by his successors, and already by the time of the ill-fated fourth emperor, Hongxi 洪熙, who reigned for only one year (1425), they had begun to fall into decay. Although generally considered a capable emperor, Hongxi angered some by maintaining conjugal relations during the mourning period and by sending eunuchs to Fujian in search of virgins.[122] Li Shimian 李時勉 (1374–1450, *jinshi* 1404), a reader in the Hanlin Academy, submitted a memorial openly criticizing the emperor for this behavior. In discussing mourning rituals and their dereliction he referred specifically to the parallel conception of society, and argued that

121 *Da Ming huidian*, 99.6a–b.
122 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 339, 866.

the emperor set the moral standard for the common people. "The three-year period of mourning is singular in its reaching from the Son of Heaven to the common people. The rectification of the various degrees of mourning is how the *li* guides the lives of the people."[123] Li's memorial infuriated the emperor, who had him beaten seventeen times with the "golden gourd (*jingua* 金瓜)."[124]

Among members of the officialdom, too, the rituals for the most part did not live up to the depiction in the *Collected Ming Institutions*. Wang Chongqin 王崇慶, a sixteenth-century resident of Hebei, found excessive extravagance among local officials in their performance of the rites.

> Today the ritual of friends and family making offerings of food for the family in mourning really fulfills the ancient rituals. But I only criticize the practice that when performing the funeral rites for a relative, at the beginning and at ten-day intervals, of drinking wine and eating meat, as if the day were no different from any other, and this continues until the burial (*fayin* 發引). Relatives and friends come to feast, and give pleasure to the mourners. This loses the ancient rites.[125]

And among the people from Changle, Fujian, Xie Zhaozhe tells us, people tended to be lax in their observance of the correct rites, and most laughed at those who used *Family Rituals*.

> As to the practice of the ancient rituals today, [those who practice] funerary rituals get to seventeen [of the required subrituals], marriage fifteen; sacrifices are done carelessly, and capping is no longer performed.[126] Our people from Changle are most familiar with *Family Rituals*, and among them there are those who use it. And yet most of us laugh at their excesses.[127]

How much all of this was new to the late Ming is not obvious. Descriptions of decadence are largely unique to the sixteenth century and after, and yet this was also the time in which new parameters of acceptable discourse made available such statements as Xie Zhaozhe's.

What is clearly new to the late Ming is not laxity in the performance of the correct rituals, but a collective forgetting of what the correct rituals were. When early Ming emperors and imperial relatives violated rituals, they frequently did so flagrantly and knowingly. Imperial clansmen, with considerable time and money at their disposal and with perhaps not a little resentment at their exclusion from power, were frequent violators of mourning. The numbers

123 *Qinding Mingjian* 欽定明鑑, 1817, 7.11a. Li's memorial also criticized wasteful construction projects, coming late to morning audiences, and spending too much time with women and eunuchs.

124 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 866.

125 *Kaizhou zhi* 開州志, 1534 10卷 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Shudian, 1963), 2a. For a similar criticism of feasting and the putting on of performances at funerals, see Xu Laixue 許來學, *Yudu xianzhi* 雩都縣志, 1546 2 + 1卷 (Beijing: Tushuguan microfilm ed., 1985), 1.6b.

126 Capping (*guanli* 冠禮) was a ritual of adulthood, usually performed for boys at age twenty.

127 *Wu za zu*, 14.4346.

of these clansmen greatly multiplied in the Ming, and they frequently became thorns in the sides of the government.[128] In the late Ming, even those who sought orthodox observance found that goal elusive. Certainly the reorientation in Ming thinking that made rituals malleable contributed to this collective forgetting. With so much effort spent changing rituals to make them reflect emotions, the truly orthodox became unrecognizable.

Tan Qian (1594–1657), in his jottings *Zaolin zazu* (1644), wrote that after the death of Empress Dowager Rensheng 仁聖 in the summer of 1596, a special imperial edict ordered that all officials were to wear drab green (*qing* 青) clothes. When Director of Rituals Fan Qian 范謙 came to court, he dressed in white mourning clothes. When he got to the outer court he saw that all the other officials were in drab green, and had to run home to change his clothes. Tan Qian goes on to report on the director's later punctilious observances, showing how hollow they seemed, after the confusion that had resulted from the order. How could his meticulous changes of clothes have any meaning, when the edict had so radically changed the rites? And the confusion lasted beyond the mourning period for Rensheng. A decade later, an edict arrived in Tan Qian's home area announcing the empress dowager's death. Tan noted, not without contempt: "When the edict arrived in Zhejiang there was considerable doubt about whether to wear green or white. In the end they decided to wear green."[129]

The pervasive influence of Buddhism in the late Ming also added to the confusion. Syncretic religiosity had produced a culture of death. Buddhist, Daoist, and other practices came to be elements that participated in a single unity. One could no longer speak of a Buddhist funeral so much as one could speak of a funeral with Buddhist elements. Xie Zhaozhe elucidates this most clearly in a passage delineating the appeal of various heterodox trends.

> When those in mourning fail to grieve, and desire to look on the beautiful, this is the first delusion. When they do not comply with the *li* and carry out Buddhist practices, this is the second delusion. When they do not bury quickly, and wait for an auspicious burial ground, this is the third delusion. The first delusion is caused by the sickness of vulgar sons. The second delusion is caused by wives. The third is caused by the whole world's violation.[130]

In the context of funerals, then, Buddhism was not taken as a separate religion, but as "practices" that could be borrowed from, to enrich the outline of the

128 When, for example, a second-generation descendant of the eighteenth son of Hongwu died, his eldest son went into mourning but was seen constantly drunk. Liu Zhong 劉忠 was sent to restrain him, but the unfilial son killed him in a fit of anger. His punishment was loss of his status as imperial kinsman. *Ming shi*, 3602–3. For other episodes see *Ming shi*, 4883.

129 Tan Qian 談遷, *Zaolin zazu* 棗林雜俎, 1644 6卷 (Biji Xiaoshuo Daguan ed.), zhi.3402. See also, *Ming shi*, 114.3534. Her surname was Chen 陳, and she came originally from Tongzhou 通州, Sichuan.

130 *Wu za zu*, 14.4346.

Confucian funeral. But people had moved so far from orthodox perceptions of the Confucian rites that they were no longer aware of what was Confucian and what Buddhist. Thus in another passage Xie Zhaozhe noted, "Today those who mourn a relative by not eating wine and drinking meat are rare. Prohibiting it for a period of one hundred days is possible, but going beyond this one becomes afraid that it might result in disease. [Still in all] eating meat adds small flavor [to the food] and it is not much of a hindrance [to forego it]."[131] In this passage what is most interesting is not the allegation of extravagance, that people feasted after the funeral, but that Xie himself, an avowed anti-Buddhist, assumed that meat and wine should be avoided for one hundred days, the Buddhist duration.

The application of the rules of *duoqing* also indicated the tendency to forget. The arguments presented in the two famous cases of *duoqing* discussed above are evidence of this, because by the time of Zhang Juzheng many *duoqing* criteria were forgotten, and the case turned on the wishes of the emperor.

A third case of *duoqing* occurred late in the dynasty, as the forces of rebellion and Manchu invasion threatened to tumble the Ming. Yang Sichang 楊嗣昌 (1558–1641) was a military official engaged in defending the Ming state. When his father died in 1635, Yang left to observe mourning, but before even a year had passed he was called back to his post on imperial orders. Although called back to serve on the "justifiable excuse of military duty in a time of emergency," impeachments of Yang Sichang abounded.[132]

Certainly these attacks on Yang were politically motivated. He opposed the Donglin Academy members, who were the most vocal in their criticism of Yang's *duoqing*. And yet these attacks could not have been made by or to individuals who were well acquainted with the rules of *duoqing*: Yang was a military official, it was a time of national emergency, and his *duoqing* had been insisted upon by the emperor.[133] Only two generations had elapsed since the case of Zhang Juzheng; in fact the grandson of one of Zhang's critics criticized Yang.[134] Yet no one, not even Yang or his supporters, seemed to notice how different his case was from Zhang's.[135]

131 *Wu za zu*, 14.4344.

132 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 1539.

133 One of Yang's critics, Liu Tongsheng 劉同升, had acknowledged that the *duoqing* had been at the insistence of the emperor, but noted that Yang was too quick to give in. Quoted in *Ming shi*, 5710–11. Similar arguments were made against Chen Xinjia 陳新甲, who allegedly received a promotion during his mourning leave. Ibid., 6596, 6636.

134 *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 140.

135 Lu Xiangsheng 盧象昇 was a military official in charge of defending Shanxi. He, too, was called back from mourning to continue his military duties, after the death of his father in 1637. Although his *duoqing* was justifiable, he was intensely unwilling to forgo mourning, and delivered his rallying speech to his troops in his mourning gown, later telling the emperor that he feared his ability to incite his troops to fight was hampered by this action. *Ming shi*, 6762–63.

As the next chapter will show, this Ming reorientation set important ground for changes in the Qing. When early Qing emperors and their entourages began to establish a government that did not genuinely adhere to the parallel conception of society, all the while portraying themselves as Confucians, they were able to build on important Ming reorientations that made such changes acceptable.

3

The early Qing transformation of mourning practice

During the early years of the Qing dynasty, many elites who had survived the horrendous suffering of the dynastic transition were forced to make personal decisions about whether they would serve the new Manchu regime. The new rulers, for their part, faced the question of how best, as Manchus, to rule a Han state. This chapter discusses events during this period of dramatic societal and governmental change and seeks to demonstrate the impacts of these changes on the role of and attitudes toward mourning practice and behavior.

The Kangxi Emperor 康熙 (r. 1662–1722) was the first Qing ruler to examine the system of mourning and formulate a consistent policy on it. In his official pronouncements he opted decisively for the parallel conception of society, openly declaring that he was adhering to the Confucian norms that would make Manchu rule worthy of the Mandate of Heaven. In practice, however, the policy he implemented ran counter to the parallel conception. Building, with the aid of his advisors, on both the attitudes of the late Ming and Manchu notions of how best to rule, he opted for a system based on absolute, not parallel, devotion. His routinization of *duoqing* for members of his entourage was emblematic of his attitude, as was his decision to drop usage of the term *duoqing*: he replaced it with the phrase "observing mourning at the post."

Accompanying new challenges to traditional Confucian mourning rites during the early Qing dynasty, there was an unprecedented increase in writings on death and mourning rituals. This phenomenon is documented in this chapter, and the writings of particular individuals and the place of those writings in their lives are examined. Interest in ritual will be related to interactions among wider scholarly currents, the experience of intellectuals and their families during the Qing conquest, and the attitude of the Qing government.

The case studies to be presented in this chapter suggest that generations of intellectuals, in part reacting to the trauma of the dynastic transition, came to recognize the substantial variation that had existed in death ritual as practiced at different times and in different places. Out of their common experiences they sought to forge a China-wide system of mourning rites. The new attitude

toward ritual on the part of the Qing state facilitated their efforts, as did the process of eremitism: many who refused to serve the Qing government as officials were freer to develop their own conceptions of death ritual.

For many who did choose to serve, that decision often entailed a turning inward toward their family, particularly where ritual matters were concerned. This development, abetted by attitudes of the Qing government, further eroded the parallel conception of society. In the post-conquest environment some scholars both inside and outside the government were able to build a new and independent unity apart from the state.

These thinkers emphasized mourning because it tied them to their families and collective pasts, combining the personal with the political. For the generation of scholars who survived the dynastic transition, mourning rituals provided a means of expressing grief and sadness over the death of parents. These rituals also gave that generation of intellectuals a way to mourn the loss of the Ming dynasty.

For the most forward-looking of Qing scholars, the new system would be one that permitted the rationalization of the rituals, and the collective construction of a new mourning system. An integral part of their endeavor was evidential scholarship (*kaozhengxue* 考證學), which they used to examine previous scholarship on mourning; but they also relied on their observations of the world around them, such as elite practices, popular practices, and the practices unique to certain geographical areas. They also looked to "reason" (*li* 理) and "emotion" (*qing* 情). Thus in many ways they too were continuing an effort begun in the late Ming, but in the Qing these thinkers went much further than anyone of that earlier time.

Writing on ritual: a quantitative understanding

As part of this study a search for all essays on funerals and mourning ritual written between the years 1368 and 1800 was made.[1] Biographical collections and reference works were then consulted to produce as much information as possible about the authors of these works, including their hometowns and dates of birth and death.[2]

As a regional phenomenon, Table 1 indicates writings on ritual by

1 Where, as is often the case, it is impossible to determine the exact year of a work's composition, I have been satisfied to narrow that date to within a twenty-year period.

2 A scholar's dates of birth and death are often not easily discovered. In this effort I have used the standard reference work Jiang Liangfu 姜亮夫, *Lidai mingren nianli beizhuan zongbiao* 歷代名人年里碑傳總表 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1965). The sources for Ming and Qing biography are well known to historians of these periods. The major index to biographical writings from the Qing period is Tu Lien-che 杜連耦 and Fang Chao-ying 房兆楹, *Sanshisan zhong Qingdai zhuanji zonghe yinde* 三十三種清代傳記綜合引得 (Peiping, 1932). For the Ming period, the major index is *Mingren zhuanji ziliao suoyin* 明人傳記資料索引 (Taibei: Wenshizhe Chubanshe, 1965).

Table 1. *Interest in mourning ritual by macroregion*

Macroregion	Area (sq. km)[a]	No. essays on death rit. by scholars born 1610–1780 (%)[b]	No. essays on death rit. by scholars born 1368–1610[b]
North China	746,470	12 (17)	4
Manchuria	790,000	0 (–)	0
Northwest China	771,300	2 (3)	0
Upper Yangzi	423,950	0 (–)	0
Middle Yangzi	699,700	8 (10)	0
Lower Yangzi	192,740	53 (66)	1
Southeast Coast	226,670	3 (4)	0
Lingnan	424,900	1 (–)	0
Yungui	470,570	0 (–)	0
TOTALS		79 (100)	5

[a] *Source*: For all except Manchuria, Skinner, 213. For Manchuria, *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji*, vol. 7.
[b] Principal finding aids: *Huangchao jingshi wenbian*, *Huang Ming jingshi Wenbian*, *Zhongguo congshu zonglu*, 3 vols.; *Dictionary of Ming Biography*; *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*; *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*.

macroregion for the Ming dynasty, and the Qing until 1800.[3] The cutoff year of 1610 was chosen to contrast the adult lives of those living under the Ming with those who wrote after the Ming fall. Even though some sources may not have survived the Ming, the difference was dramatic. This table shows only five works on death and mourning rituals written by Ming scholars. During the Qing until 1800, there were seventy-nine such works.

Figure 6 shows the hometowns and cities of the Qing writers represented in Table 1.[4] Most of them were from the lower Yangzi macroregion, the most prosperous region of China, producing both the greatest number of examination candidates and the greatest number of intellectuals. It was in this most

3 The division of China into macroregions was first proposed by the anthropologist G. William Skinner in 1964. "Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 24:1–3 (Nov. 1964–May 1965): 3–44, 195–228, 363–99. See also his "Regional Urbanization in Nineteenth-Century China," in *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1977), 211–49. For criticisms and applications of Skinner's approach see Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland: State, Society, and Economy in Inland North China, 1853–1937* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993); and Barbara Sands and Ramon H. Myers, "The Spatial Approach to Chinese History: A Test," *Journal of Asian Studies* 45, no. 4 (August 1986): 721–43. A macroregion is essentially a transprovincial region within which an independent system of development takes place. By development, Skinner means "social and cultural as well as economic and political" development. "Regional Urbanization," 212. For Skinner, the guiding principle of his macroregional analysis is the development of cities, which are "the 'command posts' that serve to articulate and integrate human activity in space and time." Ibid., 216.

4 I am indebted to Mark Saba and Max B. Kutcher for preparing these maps.

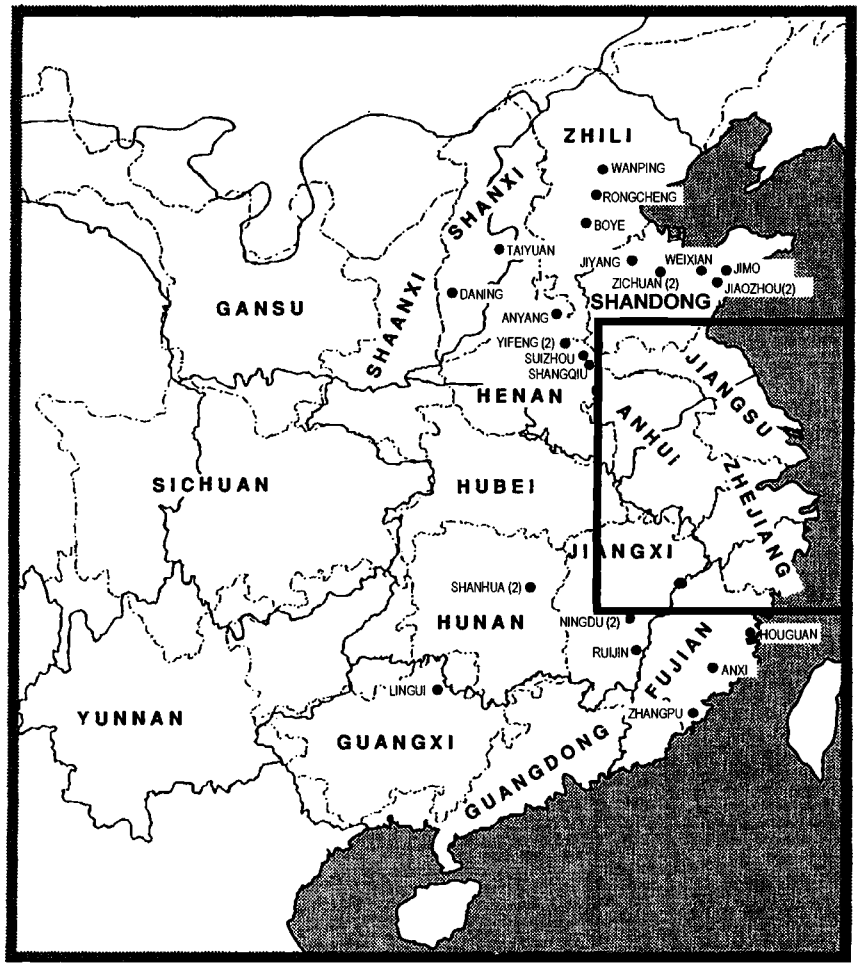

Figure 6. Home towns and cities of scholars on mourning, with inset showing the lower Yangzi macroregion. As this figure and Table 1 indicate, writing on mourning ritual was concentrated in but also transcended the lower Yangzi macroregion.

highly developed area of China that scholarship of all kinds was most active. The vast majority of scholarship that came from the lower Yangzi can also be correlated with the presence of a strong printing industry centered in this area, which facilitated publication. Though there might well have been others outside this area with similar ideas, their writings never made it into the flow of published documents.

Table 1 and Figure 6 reveal the extent to which interest in ritual transcended

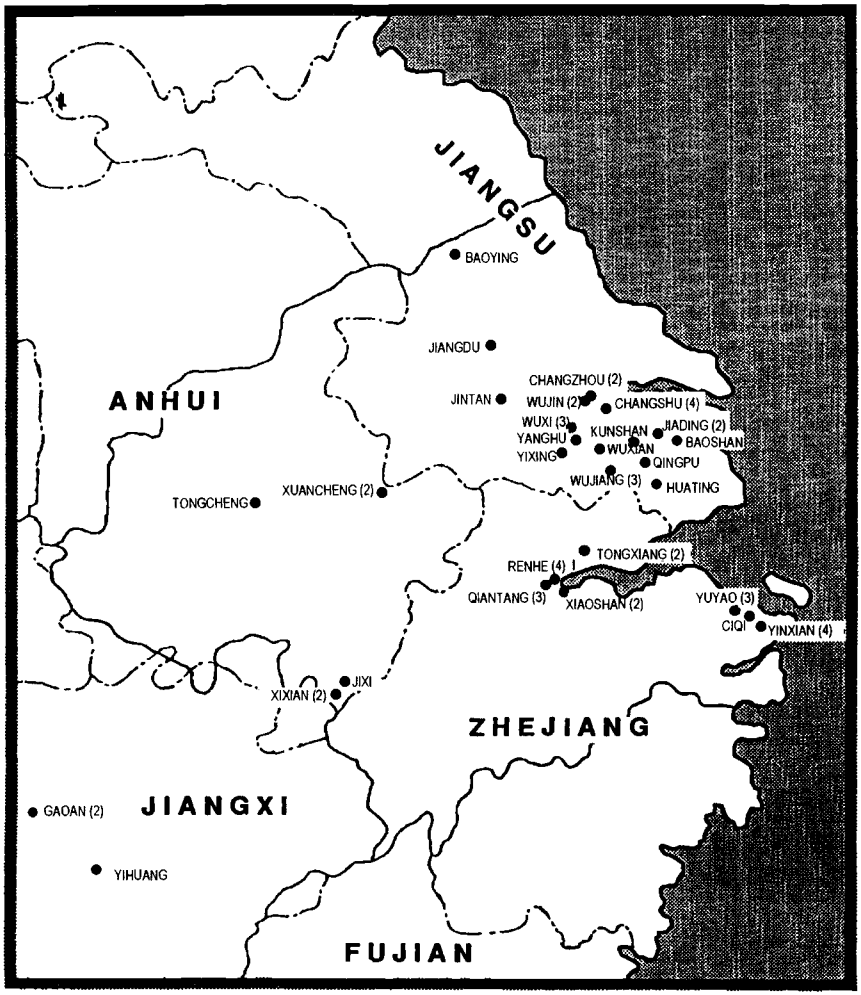

Figure 6 (*continued*).

the boundaries of the lower Yangzi macroregion. Although most scholarship took place in the lower Yangzi, the presence of other writers throughout the empire reveal that newfound interest in ritual was more than simply a lower Yangzi phenomenon. Concentrations of scholars interested in ritual appear near the city of Changsha 長沙, in Hunan; in Shandong and in Jiangxi.[5] But,

5 Professor Yang Ruowei, herself a native of Shandong and Professor of History at Beijing University, suggested to me that people in Shandong tended to be concerned with the rites because Shandong is the birthplace of Confucius. (Note 5 continues on p. 78.)

somewhat surprisingly, we see also the occasional scholar in a more out-of-the-way place, such as in the mountains of Shaanxi Province.

The nature and extent of intercommunications among scholars, both in the lower Yangzi macroregion and extending to scholars in the hinterlands, suggests that this movement to study ritual was national in scope. Thus, Zhang Erqi 張爾岐 (1612–78), a native of Shaanxi who lived a life of seclusion, and whose name "never penetrated beyond the borders of his district" nevertheless managed to befriend Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–82), a major lower Yangzi intellectual.[6] Another example is Cai Shiyuan 蔡世遠 (1682–1733), a Fujianese scholar whose interest in ritual was excited by Zhang Boxing, a native of Henan.[7]

Among the pocket of scholars from Jiangxi, friendship with other lower Yangzi elites provided the means for publication. Qiu Weiping 邱維屏 (1614–79), author of a work on mourning rites, was able to have his work published through the aid of his brother-in-law Wei Xi 魏禧 (1624–81), whose connections with lower Yangzi elites were through his Jiangsu-born friend Zou Qimo 鄒祇謨 (*jinshi* 1658).[8]

For many, service in the bureaucracy brought prominence in intellectual circles. This was frequently the case even for officials from relatively isolated areas, such as southern Jiangxi. Luo Yougao 羅有高 (1733–78), a native of Ruijin 瑞金, Jiangxi, came into contact with other scholars after he passed the *juren* (provincial level) examination.[9] Lan Qianqiu 藍千秋 (fl. 1746), a native of Yihuang 宜黃, Jiangxi, and author of works on different aspects of mourning rituals, wrote his works on the rites while an official in the Board of Personnel during 1746, in Peking.[10]

For the pocket of scholarship in Jiangxi Province, a possible explanation for the interest in ritual is the contrast between the northern and southern parts of the province. In the southern half of Jiangxi, generally referred to as Gannan 贛南, people adhere strongly to geomantic doctrines. As part of these beliefs, people there disinter the bones of the deceased after three years and move them to a different location. Such doctrines were not followed in the northern parts of the province. Scholars from both areas witnessed the contrast, and wrote in order to reconcile the differences.

6 Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing [Qing] Period* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943–44), 35. See *Huangchao jingshi wenbian*, 62.3a–4b, 5a–6b. Gu had traveled to Shaanxi to study customs there.

7 Li Huan 李桓, *Guochao qi xian lei zheng* 國朝耆獻類徵, 69.31a. Chen Shouqi 陳壽祺 was given an entree into the world of national scholarship by his well-connected Fujianese teacher, Meng Chaoran 孟超然 (1731–97). Meng was himself a student of the rites, which he began studying while in mourning for his father. Meng wrote a book on the funeral rites entitled *Sangli jilue* 喪禮輯略(1卷), as well as a treatise against the geomantic practices that were so popular in his region, *Cheng shi lu* 誠是錄. His student Chen Shouqi wrote on the two Dai commentaries of the *Book of Rites*: *Daxiao Dai li ji kao* 大小戴禮記考.

8 For Qiu's work see *Huangchao jingshi wenbian*, 62.57a–58b. See his *Qiu Bangshi wenchao* 邱邦士文鈔(2卷), reproduced in *Yitang jiuzi wenchao* 易堂九子文鈔. On Wei Xi see *Eminent Chinese*, 847–48. Wei was also a student of the rites, and wrote on them with his brother, Wei Jirui 魏際瑞.

9 *Eminent Chinese*, 826.

10 *Huangchao jingshi wenbian*, 62.8a.

If the movement to study and reform mourning rituals was because of personal interconnections national in scope, it was also national in scope because of the commonality of issues raised. Scholars of the time dealt with similar concerns in a vocabulary that was of common design. Their language was that of evidential scholarship, and their concerns were the use and clarification of the mistaken doctrines of the past to correct the practices of their age.

Benjamin Elman's work provides the background for the study of this net of scholarly connections. Elman notices that the pockets of scholarship that had developed throughout China were "tributaries of, or reactions against, the dominant scholarly trends" that developed in the lower Yangzi area.[11] He also notes the importance of both the institutional and the more casual contacts that fostered the development of a national elite. These structural forms of connections "instituted a sense of common purpose among its practitioners by defining the content and methods of textual scholarship. Common purpose was translated into shared research techniques, and into the emergence of a complex communication network through which evidential research was transmitted and evaluated."[12]

Elman's elucidation of the origins of evidential research as a shared discourse has been important to my own work. But, as Kai-wing Chow has noted, we should not assume that scholars who wrote on ritual in the early Qing did so merely because they wished to use ritual to pursue evidential studies.[13] Instead, they often wrote out of a primary interest in ritual, but employed the scholarly discourse of their age: evidential scholarship. Certainly there were those who wrote about ritual merely to use the ancient texts as grist for their scholarly interests. But most, like Mao Qiling, would argue that "people study the rituals in order to practice them."[14] As the next section shows, the deeper background of the tremendous rise in interest in ritual can be found in the collective response of people in the early Qing to the dynastic transition.

Dynastic transition and mourning

During the decline of the Ming dynasty and the subsequent rise of the Qing, China witnessed a devastating decrease in population that was unprecedented

11 Benjamin Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984), 12.

12 Elman, 173.

13 Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China: Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 2.

14 Mao Qiling 毛奇齡, *Sangli wushuo pian* 喪禮吾說篇10卷, in *Xihe heji* 西河合集 1770. In the same vein, Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 wrote, "To know is to know ritual. Ritual is to practice what one knows." Cited in Chow, 50. According to the *Li ji*, when in mourning and prior to the burial, the person in mourning should study the funeral rituals. *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 55–56.

in its history.[15] The waves of death began in 1586, with an epidemic of what is now believed to have been smallpox. For four years the disease raged through most of China, causing widespread death in thirteen provinces. A second outbreak occurred in 1639 and lasted until 1644; it brought widespread death in ten provinces. The effects of the second plague were exacerbated by poor weather conditions: a cycle of drought and flood worsened the devastation.[16]

Human affairs made matters worse. By 1644 Manchu forces had succeeded in gaining control of Peking, after a military struggle waged not only against the forces that had remained loyal to the Ming, but against separate rebel armies led by Zhang Xianzhong 張獻忠 and Li Zicheng 李自成. Some of the worst loss of life occurred in the prosperous lower Yangzi macroregion, where several cities were plundered, and tens of thousands of people killed. For evocative accounts of this period, one need look no further than a series of documents translated and edited by Lynn A. Struve.[17]

A moving eyewitness chronicle by Wang Xiuchu documents the destruction in Yangzhou 楊州, Zhejiang. The people there were victims of ten days of carnage that decimated the city and its population, leaving no category of person unaffected. Corpses lay in piles, and from atop his roof Wang could hear the pitiful cries of hundreds of those who had lost relatives.[18] The sheer number of corpses became overwhelming. "Every gutter or pond that we passed was stacked with corpses, pillowing each other's arms and legs. Their blood had flowed into the water, and the combination of red and green was producing a spectrum of colors. The canals, too, had been filled to level with dead bodies."[19] In a city in Shanxi, several thousand women committed suicide to avoid rape by the forces of the rebel Li Zicheng. The city wells were filled to overflowing with their corpses.[20]

15 Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past: A Social and Economic Interpretation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1973), 311. Elvin's estimates are based on examinations of local gazetteers, many of which mention death rates ranging between twenty and ninety percent for their areas. He assumes an overall death rate of twenty percent, on each occasion of major epidemic disease.

16 Elvin, 310; Frederic E. Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise: The Manchu Reconstruction of Imperial Order in Seventeenth-Century China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 7–8.

17 Lynn A. Struve, ed. and trans., *Voices from the Ming-Qing Cataclysm: China in Tigers' Jaws* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993).

18 Struve, 35, 40. See also Wang Xiuchu 王秀楚, "A Memoir of Ten Days' Massacre in Yangchow [Yangzhou shiri ji 楊州十日記]" Lucien Mao 毛如升, trans., *Tien-hsia Monthly*. 4, 5 (May 1937): 521–22.

19 Struve, 36; see also Wang Xiuchu, 522. In Jiading a similar carnage resulted in the deaths of as many as twenty thousand. Jerry Dennerline, *The Chia-ting [Jiading] Loyalists: Confucian Leadership and Social Change in Seventeenth-Century China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), 1.

20 Xu Bingyi 徐秉義, *Mingmo zhonglie jishi* 明末忠烈紀實 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Guji Chubanshe, 1987), 37.

In such circumstances, the provision of even the most rudimentary funeral rites became nearly impossible. Often entire family groups were thoroughly eradicated, and there was no one left to bury the dead. For many who survived to wander among the corpses, the problem of identifying a deceased relative could become insurmountable. Since many had died by decapitation, the problems of identification were often effectively doubled. In Yangzhou, the heads of corpses were piled high upon each other, and the gruesome task of identifying disembodied heads grew impossible, as darkness settled over the city.[21]

The incineration of corpses, too, made the identification of remains difficult. Ruan Zhidian 阮之鈿 was a resident of Huaining 懷寧, Anhui. When Zhang Xianzhong conquered the area in 1637, he burned Ruan's residence to the ground, effectively preventing the differentiation of his corpse from that of his servants.[22] Ming forces, too, used the obliteration of corpses as a weapon against the Manchus. The Ming general Mao Wenlong 毛文龍 had over five hundred Manchus killed by beheading, and then had their bodies burned to prevent kinfolk from retrieving them.[23]

In these times, efforts to locate and preserve the bodies of deceased relatives were acts of personal filiality, as well as acts of loyalty to the crumbling Ming state. As such, they were clear enunciations of the parallel conception of society. In an episode that occurred at an unspecified place in Zhejiang, a son who could find only his father's head struggled to bury him as a complete corpse. Implicated in an anti-Manchu plot, his father had been decapitated outside the family residence. His head had rolled to the front door of the house, though the body itself could not be located. The son buried his father whole, by using the body of the man who had plotted against him. He broke into the man's tomb, destroyed the head of the corpse, and put his own father's head onto the corpse of their enemy. He confessed his actions in an anonymous memoir.

> The inside of the coffin was luxuriant in the extreme. The character *shou* 壽 (longevity) was embroidered in the grave clothing. The color of the corpse was still lifelike. With my knife I severed the head, and cut it to bits, exposing the brain. Some fragments entered the gullet [of the corpse, which I removed]. I placed the head atop the corpse, and at that moment heaven was dark and earth confused. The color of the sun was without brightness.[24]

21 Struve, 39; Wang Xiuchu, 525.
22 Xu Bingyi, 50–51.
23 Xu Guoying 許國英, *Qingjian yizhilu* 清鑑易知錄 (Beijing: Guji Chubanshe ed., 1987), 前編 2.23.
24 *Zhuangshi shian* 莊氏史案, in *Tongshi* 痛史 #4, 7b. In another grizzly act, Lu Qipeng 陸起鵬 and his brother killed the rebel Luo Rong 羅戎, cut open his chest and removed the heart, and offered it as a sacrifice to their deceased father, who had been one of the rebel's victims. *Qing shi gao* 清史稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1977), 13,781–82.

Elsewhere, the identification and burial of a household member was an expression of loyalty that could precede suicide. Four students of Cai Daoxian 蔡道憲 begged a rebel leader to permit them to bury their master. After they buried him, they committed suicide.[25] A husband and wife committed suicide; their son located and buried their bodies before killing himself.[26] Servants were not exempt from such acts of loyalty. Xu Daoxing 徐道興 was a local official serving at a border post. As rebels approached, he gave the soldiers and commoners permission to flee. A servant offered to remain behind and follow his master in death. In gratitude, Xu sent the man in search of coffins for both of them.[27]

When surviving family members carried out lone acts of suicide to remain faithful to family and dynasty, often only the natural world would be left to acknowledge their action. Wang Yunkai 王運開 was the last of his family to die. When his body was hoisted from the city moat weeks later, it was still lifelike.[28] Heroic acts like these were not for everyone. Some contented themselves with the burning of objects for use in the spirit world.[29]

The vast majority of corpses were simply burdens to be gotten rid of. In Yangzhou, the victorious Manchu forces ordered that the corpses be disposed of by burning. "Everywhere around us," Wang Xiuchu reported, "corpses were being burned. The smoke gathered like a mist and extended for miles."[30]

Death by plague raised many of the same issues as death in wartime: it might also result in the complete destruction of the family unit.[31] For these dead, too, the end was usually cremation.

The profound impact of a period of such intense loss of life would seem to be self-evident. However, a discussion of such a nature must be prefaced with the reminder that death in large numbers was very much more a part of regular life in the China of more than four hundred years ago than it is in the modern world. As Jerry Dennerline suggests in his study of Ming loyalism in Jiading 嘉定, Jiangsu, residents of the coastal cities in the lower Yangzi region were heir to frequent episodes of violence and death by disease, of which the

25 *Ming shi*, 7536.

26 *Ming shi*, 7573. For similar instances see ibid., 7573–74.

27 *Ming shi*, 7572.

28 Xu Bingyi, 100. In a similar case, the body of one righteous individual miraculously escaped being devoured by wild dogs. Ibid.

29 See generally Susan Naquin, "Funerals in North China: Uniformity and Variation," in James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 61.

30 Wang Xiuchu, 536; Struve, 48.

31 In the Ming, when the plague struck Gui Youguang's extended household killing over thirty members, it seemed to attack only the females. This may have been because the women in a traditional elite household lived together in the isolation of the "women's apartments," through which the disease might have quickly spread. Gui Youguang 歸有光, *Zhen Chuan Xiansheng ji* 震川先生集, 1673 30+11卷 (Taibei: Yuanliu Chubanshe, 1983), 25.594.

Ming–Qing transition period was perhaps only a very conspicuous and perhaps more extreme example.[32] Thus the experience of those who survived the Ming–Qing transition differed in extent, but not in nature, from the experiences of those who came before.

Nevertheless, the devastating loss of life that accompanied the Ming–Qing transition subtly influenced discourse on death rituals. One example is cremation, which was the endpoint not just for those whose unclaimed remains lay in piles, but also for people who in increasing numbers chose it, for religious as well as economic reasons. It was the Buddhist funeral of choice, and fit well with the mind-sets of people who had witnessed the pains life had to offer. They sought hope in the belief that the troubles of this world would be transcended in another. Similarly, some chose the Buddhist tonsure not just to evade the Manchu requirement that men shave their heads and adopt the queue, but also to express affinity to Buddhism.[33]

There was thus a fine line between the choice of cremation for religious reasons, and the choice of cremation for economic reasons. Gu Yanwu, one of the early Qing intellectuals who was most concerned with the resurgence of the practice, seemed to realize that cremation satisfied needs beyond the economic. But he still maintained that the problem would end if officials set aside lands for the interment of corpses.[34]

Confucians had agreed since early times that the proper disposal of the corpse should maintain it (particularly the bones) inviolate. Elemental, destructive forces such as fire and water were a menace to the bones of the dead, as they had been to the living. And yet there were local areas in which, traditionally, powerful elemental forces were viewed not as menaces to be protected against, but as forces to which the corpse would be consigned. Thus, in coastal areas where the sea was both a source of livelihood and a threat to life, some communities practiced water burial (*shuizang* 水葬).[35]

32 Dennerline, 2–3. The havoc wreaked by seacoast pirates plays a conspicuous role, for example, in the writings of Gui Youguang. On the pirates see Dian H. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast, 1790–1810* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987); Zheng Liangsheng, ed., *Mingdai wokou shiliao* 明代倭寇史料 (Taibei: Wenshizhe Chubanshe, 1987); Dennerline, 127–28, 184–85.

33 For example, when Li Shaoxian 李紹先 was dead, his servant Li Zhuan 李篆 adopted the tonsure to better serve him in the next world. Xu Bingyi, 66.

34 Gu Yanwu, "Huo zang 火葬," in *Ri zhi lu*, 6.19. Gu saw the problem of cremation as originating at least in Song times. The clue that he knew there were religious ends to cremation is from his inclusion of a quotation from the Song dynastic history, which pointed out that many of their age could willingly "support their parents to the extreme, fearing only that their efforts would be insufficient. But when they die they roast them and cast them aside." Even in the mass burnings of corpses at Yangzhou, much of the labor was parceled to Buddhist monks and nuns. Wang Xiuchu, 535

35 This analysis is a traditional one among Chinese scholars and is used to explain the rise of regionally diverse funeral practices. See the essays collected in *Zhongguo wenhua shi sanbai ti* 中國文化史三百提 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1987). Tang Qi 唐祈 and Peng Weijin

Many scholars refused to succumb to the temptations of an easy disposal of the corpse, or to Buddhist ideas about death and life. Certainly neither they nor their families were immune to the tribulations of the period of transition. Gu Yanwu, reflecting on the relatives he had lost, wrote:

> I think of uncles and brothers and cousins who have died in the last two years, those in-laws and friends who have died, those who were older than I and have died, those who were younger than I and have died, and the number is uncountable.[36]

The obligations of paying for the funerals of deceased relatives was something Gu took very seriously. In 1641 he mortgaged 600 *mu* of family land to pay for the funeral of his foster grandfather.[37]

Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610–95) was another scholar who struggled to maintain a careful observance of the funeral rites despite a life filled with turmoil.[38] In 1656 he set out alone to bury the coffin of his young son.[39] He recorded his emotions in a poem written later that year.

Reaching Huaan Mountain to Bury the Coffin of My Son (1656)	至化安山送壽兒葬
For five years I have shut the doors,	五年吾閉戶
and relied on you to be diligent and attentive.	賴汝得殷勤
The Northland snow protects the new ground,	朔雪遮新土
as the rustic mountain puts forth a small grave.	荒山出小墳
The heavens are dark as I set out alone,	天昏吾自去
from which gangs will the moon hide you?	月暗汝誰群
I approach old age without many tears,	臨老無多淚
a mountain stream will never dissolve.	溪流轂不分
This year I walk the road of tears,	今年行哭路
the past year has brought me to climb this height.	去歲此登高
Suddenly in two men's days,	倏忽兩人日
the living and the dead are on one horse's back.	死生一馬尻
Plum flowers perfume the rice bowl,	梅花薰飯碗
stony bones cover the square robe.	石骨冷方袍
I take three steps from your grave,	去汝墳三步
and from my lonely hall will I divine your prison.[40]	幽堂自卜牢

彭維金 (eds.), *Zhonghua minzu fengsu da cidian* 中華民族風俗大辭典 (Jiangxi Jiaoyu Chubanshe ed., 1988), 388–89, 390–92, 393–95, 396–98.

36 Willard J. Peterson, "The Life of Ku Yen-wu [Gu Yanwu] (1613–1682)," part I, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 28: 149.

37 Wakeman, 776n.170. There are 6.6 *mu* to the acre.

38 Some details from his life will suggest the kind of turmoil he lived through. In 1628 he traveled to Peking with an awl in his sleeve to avenge his father's wrongful death. In 1644, 1645, and 1646 he fought against the Manchus in different loyalist causes. *Eminent Chinese*, 352.

39 Huang Houbing 黃垕炳, *Huang Lizhou Xiansheng nianpu* 黃梨洲先生年譜 (Taibei: Wenxian Congkan ed., n.d.), 200.

40 Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲, *Huang Lizhou shi ji* 黃梨洲詩集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1959).

To those scholars who in troubled times sought to perform the rites, cremation was unacceptable. To them, it was inconceivable that "when a parent died the family members would raise the body up and drop it into a fire, and if the bones did not fully burn, they would pick them up and fling them into a deep abyss."[41]

From the writings of intellectuals who survived the dynastic transition we get a sense of its lasting impact. As Elman suggests, "The question: 'why did the Ming fall?' became the dominating point of departure for Chinese intellectuals." Associated with this was a sense of shock.

> Shock among Confucian loyalists in [the lower Yangzi] and elsewhere led to a cognitive reorganization on a scale that far exceeded the changes of the late Ming. This formative and political crisis, as it was manifested in thought, education, art, and behavior, shook Chinese society – [the lower Yangzi] especially – during this period.[42]

From the perspective of mourning rituals, the dynastic transition may be shown to have induced a crisis that was at once personal and political. For the scholars who survived, the personal dimensions of the crisis involved complex feelings of guilt: guilt for their own misdeeds in allowing the government to fall, and guilt for having survived a crisis in which so many others had perished. After the fall of the Ming many officials took their own lives. Thus, to Elman's statement of the question asked by Chinese intellectuals of the times – "Why did the Ming fall?" – we may add the question of personal responsibility. Many were asking "What did we" or "What did our fathers do" to cause the fall of the Ming.

As Kai-wing Chow demonstrates, the interest in ritualism after the fall of the Ming was fueled by culturalism: "By devoting themselves to the study and practice of proper rituals, Chinese scholars were consciously setting themselves

41 Gu Yanwu, 63.10b. Many poems from the early Qing lament what their authors consider to be the tragedy of cremation. For example:

> People of this age practice Buddhism at funerals
> .....
> Angry flames rise like the flowing of the rainbow,
> high heaven with dark tears is also crying.
> Alas, you sons of men remain peaceful, without pain,
> in a moment the ashes are extinguished, the people dispersed.
> The spoiled flesh fallen, abandoned to snow and dew,
> hungry crows rage, as they fly below the mountains.

Wu Wenhui 吳文暉, "Min su – er shou zhi i – Huo zang shi 憫俗—二首之一—火葬詩," *Qing shi duo* 清詩鐸 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1960, 1983), 23.845.

In the Song, Gu Yanwu suggests, the dead were cremated in specially designed buildings. In one case, arrangements were made through a temple, near to which was an empty building with ten rooms, where cremations took place. The building was destroyed in a fire: for Gu this was evidence of heaven's retribution. "It [the thunderstorm] completely destroyed the crematorium. The meaning of this is that its dirty ethers should be made known. The ghosts of those who had suffered unrequited wrongs together voiced their plaint. High heaven's thunderous anger removed it by the roots." Gu Yanwu, 63.11a.

42 Elman, 50.

apart from the alien conquerors."[43] But much of the increased interest in mourning rituals per se can be traced to their position at the nexus of the personal and political crises that accompanied the Ming–Qing transition, and the guilt associated with it. As noted in Chapter 1, mourning rituals provided the means of absolving guilt over a death.

The sources are filled with examples of instances in which grief for the death of a parent became intermixed with grief for the fall of the Ming. When the Ming general Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601–45) suffered near defeat at the hands of the Manchus, the last Ming emperor treated him leniently, permitting him to remain at his post, rather than putting him in prison (the usual punishment he meted out to defeated commanders). This leniency aroused in Shi the feeling of "profound gratitude" which, as Frederic Wakeman suggests, "was intensified by Shi Kefa's own extreme sorrow at the passing away of his father, who had died of illness in 1639. The son, it is said, tried to starve himself to death and nearly went mad with grief; and he may well have transferred some of the intensity of his feelings for his father to his father-ruler, the emperor."[44] Shi observed mourning for both his father and the emperor.[45]

In many instances, the surviving children of fallen Ming officials went in search of their fathers' bodies, to pay respects to them and to express remorse over the fallen dynasty. Liu Xianyu 劉獻煜 from Guangxi was the son of a Ming official stationed in Wuchang 武昌. After the chaos died down, Liu went in search of his father's remains. Finding the road to Wuchang still impassable, he sat by the side of the road and began crying. An old man saw him, and listened to his story. As it happened, the old man knew Wuchang well, and was able to direct Liu to his father's hastily dug grave. Liu carried his father's remains back to Guangxi for burial.[46]

It was in this climate that Dorgon, prince regent of the Manchu regime, determined to woo Chinese – principally Chinese scholars – over to the Manchu side. He announced plans to provide the last Ming emperor, who had hanged himself from a tree on Coal Hill, with a proper burial.[47] Through this

43 Chow, 91.

44 Wakeman, 324–25. See also Joseph Liu, "Shi Ke-fa (1601–1645) et le contexte politique et social de la Chine au moment de l'invasion Mandchoue" (Paris: Doctorat d'Université des lettres, 1969).

45 Wakeman, 325. Wakeman gives other examples of this phenomenon. Ibid., 137n.152. See also Zhu Dongrun 朱東潤, *Chen Zilong ji qi shidai* 陳子龍及其時代 (Shanghai: Guji Chubanshe ed., 1984), 114–15.

46 *Qing shi gao*, 13,771. The account makes no further mention of Liu's mother. For other instances see the cases of Qian Meigong 錢美恭 and Zhao Wanquan 趙萬全. Ibid. Qian found his parents' bodies but did not have the money to return with them, so he remained with the temporarily buried corpses for five years. See also ibid., 13,806 (son of a Ming official pays to have coffin transported over 8,000 *li*).

47 "Even though we are an alien state (*guo* 國), we are filled with the deepest sympathy, and now we order the officials and people to observe three days of mourning for the Chongzhen emperor." Wakeman, 317n.281. Citing *Shizu shilu*, 5.52.

decision he not only attempted to preserve the moral high ground for the Manchu cause, establishing a kind of legitimacy for the Manchu succession to the throne; he also involved scholars with the state. Proper burial of the emperor required conferral of a posthumous name and preparation of an ancestral tablet. These necessitated the involvement of officials, to whom such tasks were traditionally entrusted.

Dorgon's arrangements were welcomed by many officials, who must have realized that the offer did not stem from any deep-seated respect for the remains of Chongzhen. Dorgon's proposal was a calculated effort to accomplish his own political goals. This was only the first of many such manipulations of mourning by the Manchu ruling elite. To understand how that elite was able to change the rituals we must first attempt to understand the relationship between Manchu culture and death ritual.

Manchu culture and Manchu death ritual

The Manchu conquerors took control of a state that had traditionally been involved in the regulation of its people's mourning system. To understand the different ways in which the Manchu leadership acted upon that system, it is necessary to clarify the habits, customs, and attitudes toward mourning they brought with them. An initial issue to consider is the extent to which Han and Manchu were distinct cultures.

Pamela Crossley has suggested that Manchu distinctiveness was not based on absolute differences between two cultures that had no cross fertilizations. Instead, it was at least in part a mental construct put in place after the conquest: "The conquest may have sharpened and sentimentalized a sensibility of Manchu distinctiveness, bringing it into tension with the historical indistinctiveness of the Jurchen–Nikan relationship in the pre-conquest Northeast."[48]

When it came to customs surrounding death, there were some that were distinctly Manchu, and some that were identical to Han practices. And people could dwell on the differences of some customs, using them to promote the notion of cultural distinctiveness, while they ignored other differences as well as similarities.

In constructing their identities, pre-conquest Manchus generally did not raise disposal of the corpse (as opposed to mourning the deceased) as a point of difference. This was in part because of a variation in emphasis. While Han

48 Pamela Kyle Crossley, "The Qianlong Retrospect on the Chinese-Martial (Hanjun) Banners," *Late Imperial China* 10, no. 1 (June 1989): 85. See also her *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Chinese laid great stress on the disposal of the corpse (which they took as a marker of civility), Manchus did not do so.[49]

Manchu customs for disposal of the corpse were, indeed, extremely diverse. This meant that no particular method could be identified as distinctively Manchu.[50] Even within the branch of Manchu culture from which sprang the conquerors of China there were observed several different methods for disposal of the corpse. Manchus practiced in-ground burial, cremation, animal burial, water burial, and tree burial.[51]

In the northeast, Manchus and Han Chinese had long shared a permeable border. Consequently, funeral practices among northeastern Han Chinese had more in common with those of the Manchus than with those of southern Chinese. In the south people were greatly influenced by geomantic beliefs to an extent that was unknown in the north. Even factors such as climate and lifestyle correlated to this. In the north, the *kang* was the ritual and practical center of the household for both Manchus and Han.[52] It thus was natural that household death ritual observances in the north should have more in common with each other than with the southern cultures in which life centered around the ancestral temple.[53] Just as the Manchus had been influenced by Chinese religious practices, so too had the Han Chinese been influenced by Manchu practices.[54]

After the conquest, Manchus who moved south opted primarily for in-ground burial, adapting that Han custom with seemingly little conflict. In the Manchu heartland, the animistic sorts of burial and mourning practices faded, and the most persistent forms of disposal of the corpse became in-ground burial

49 For example, the first imperially sponsored project on Manchu rituals, *Qinding Manzhou jisi dianli* 欽定滿洲祭祀典禮, said almost nothing about mortuary rituals. This fact was noted by Soningga 索寧安, who edited that work as well as another that included a section on death rituals, *Manzhou si li ji* 滿洲四禮記, 1801 (reprint ed., 1969), xu.9a–9b.

50 *Manzhou si li ji*, xu.4b.

51 "Manchu forebears' funeral practices were not very much alike. They were, for example, in-ground burial, animal burial (*shouzang* 獸葬), cremation, tree burial, water burial, and other sorts of practices." Kiyosin 秋心, "Manzu quantong fengsu 滿族傳統風俗," *Manzu yanjiu* 滿族研究, 1987.2, 87.

52 The *kang* 炕 is a raised platform bed warmed by a system of flues from a central fire.

53 Deng Ziqin, *Zhongguo fengsu shi* 中國風俗史 (Chengdu: Bashu Chubanshe, 1988), 328. As Wakeman suggests, even the conquest itself may not have been viewed as a purely Manchu act. "In fact, with the fall of Dalinghe in 1631, one can no longer speak of a war strictly between Chinese and Manchus. From that time on so much of the planning and military preparation was conducted for the Manchus by Chinese turncoats that this next stage of warfare can best be described as a struggle between the military elite of the northeastern frontier and the Ming court." Wakeman, 196.

54 According to Deng Ziqin, by the Jiaqing period (1796–1821) the geography of China (as concerned ritual) could be divided up into seven regions. The area above the Yellow River and where the *kang* was generally in use, he argues, had been influenced by both Manchu and Mongol cultures. Deng Ziqin, 328.

and cremation.[55] This is not to say that Manchus dropped all particularistic elements of their funeral practices.[56] Rather, it is to suggest that after the conquest they came to emphasize some elements of their practices over others.[57]

In mourning (as opposed to funeral practices) Manchus and Han Chinese differed. Indeed, new research by Mark Elliott suggests that widow suicide among Manchus (which was referred to as "following in death") was part of an Inner Asian tradition that maintained its distinct character.[58] The Han requirements of a three-year mourning period were largely foreign to the Manchus. Male Manchus were instead required to mourn by cutting their queues, with the length at which the hair was cut corresponding to the degree of relationship to the deceased. Women were required to cut the hair in some circumstances, in others to merely let it down (*fangfa* 放髮).[59]

Some background on hair would be useful at this point. Hair played an important role in the construction of Manchu distinctiveness, and was a conspicuous point of difference between the two peoples. Elite Chinese men in Ming times wore their hair and beards long, a style to which they ascribed great importance. In 1644 and 1645 Chinese men were ordered to wear their hair in the Manchu style: with the front of the head shaved, and with the patch of hair in the back grown long and braided.

55 "Manchus who moved south, particularly after passing into China, primarily used in-ground burial. But in their Manchu homeland, cremation would survive for equally as long." Rong Hengshan 榮恆山, "Luetan Manzu minsu 略談滿族民俗," *Manzu yanjiu* 滿族研究 1988.1 72–78, 75. Born in 1929, Rong himself is a Manchu.

56 "The Manchus thereafter forcefully put into effect in-ground burial, but they still preserved some old customs that were unlike Han customs. For example: after a person died he or she would be put in the western room, and a bed made of three boards would be set up next to the *kang*. Its height would be arranged according to the age of the deceased. If he or she were of an old age then they would be of equal height with the *kang*, of middle age then lower than that, and if they were a child then they were the lowest. The person was put upon the boards, with head toward the West. This is different from the Han practice of putting the body in the main room. The dead are removed from the house via the window, while the Han remove their dead via the door. Their coffin wood has a raised ridge (on the lid), while Han coffin materials are even across the top. They place valley grass (*gucao* 谷草) in the bottom of the coffin, along with branches of the chestnut tree – legacies of cremation. They hang up a red banner, and every day they put it out, at sunrise, and at sunset they take it down, and place it next to the coffin. There is also 'burned food,' according to *Beimeng huibian* 北盟會編 which says: 'all the things which are to be offered as sacrifices are completely burned, and considered as burned food.' There it is also mentioned that 'men remove their hats and cut their hair, women remove jewelry and clip their hair.' For a hundred days they do not remove their clothing, and do not shave their scalps. These and other Buddhist related practices are different from Han practices, and will not be delineated here." Rong Hengshan, 75.

57 *Manzhou si li ji*, completed in 1796, reveals Manchu adaptation to Han practices, and demonstrates a Manchu anxiety over the respectability of their native rituals. Soningga, that work's author, went to great (and artificial) lengths to show that Manchu rituals, despite common misconceptions, were ancient in pedigree. 序.2a, 2b, 4a–b.

58 Mark Elliott, "Manchu Widows and Ethnicity in Qing China" (unpublished manuscript).

59 *Manzhou si li ji*, 喪.6b–7a (803).

For both Han and Manchu men, the hair was an important symbol of power and perhaps virility. And yet, as Philip Kuhn has suggested, "Ironically, what to the Manchu warriors symbolized manliness, to the Chinese symbolized effeminacy."[60] Ming men prized their long hair, and looked down on shaving. Manchu men prized the shaved forehead and long queue as symbols of virility.

Tradition demanded that while in mourning, Chinese men refrain from attending to their personal grooming, which meant, among other things, that their hair be left unkempt. Although much more will be said about hair in Chapter 5, suffice it here to say that by leaving the hair disheveled, the Chinese male showed his personal loss, and punished himself, to reduce feelings of guilt. For Manchu males the same dynamic was at work. They cut the long queue to show their loss, and to give up some of their virility as a means of self-punishment. Like the rending of the garments, these were acts of self-destructiveness designed to counteract feelings of guilt and pain.

After the conquest, Chinese males kept the same traditions, leaving the head unshaven for a period of one hundred days. They did not, however, cut the queue. Manchus, however, by the eighteenth century, had appropriated the Han practice of not shaving for a hundred days during the mourning period, although they most likely continued the tradition of cutting the queue.

The relative simplicity of Manchu practices left the new ruling elite largely intolerant of what they took to be elaborate send-offs for the dead. Some of this intolerance might also have come from a greater aversion among Manchus than among Chinese toward proximity to the deceased – in other words a greater anxiety over death pollution.[61] Manchu attempts to regulate Han practices, after the conquest, are detailed in the next section.

The role of the new Qing state in reforming mourning

Manchu leaders contrasted their martial Manchu lifestyles with those of the Chinese, and found the Chinese wasteful and effete. When it came to mourning rituals, Manchus focused on the wastefulness of Han rituals as pitfalls to avoid. The exigencies of the Manchu conquest also led them to spurn extravagant funerals. Hong Taiji 皇太極 (1592–1643) was the first to suggest that mourning rituals should not waste precious resources. He criticized the popular practice of burning objects for the use of the dead, and of burying objects

60 Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 58.

61 There are various clues that this dynamic may have been at work. Manchus were more insistent than Han were on a speedy burial (a preference that applied to funerals in the Palace), mandating that the burial proceed within 77 days of the decease. In no case was the funeral to take place after the New Year. Corpses had to be disposed of in wild areas, and had to be removed via the window, rather than the door. See generally Rong Hengshan; *Manzhou si li ji*; and the following sections of this work.

with the dead. His language captures the spirit of this man, the architect of the conquest, who was impatient with waste.

An edict to the officials in attendance. Mourning and funeral rites originally had set regulations. As to our country's customs of burying with the dead, and transforming things for the use of the dead through burning, many adhere to these useless extravagances. Now if a man lives, then goods and clothes and food are what sustain him until he dies. If people have armor that they wish to bury with the dead, how can the dead make use of it? Hereafter whosoever would bury with the dead, or burn things for the use of the dead, must obey the regulations and not support such wastefulness.[62]

Hong Taiji's phenomenal rise to power had begun in 1626, when he and a group of his brothers forced their father's third wife to "follow her husband in death". Hong Taiji's motive was not devotion to his father but the arrogation of power to himself. He sought to ruin his father's plan to have his sons share power equally among themselves.[63] From that rather unfilial beginning, Hong Taiji went on to command some of the bloodiest encounters in the war, such as the siege of Dalinghe in 1631.[64] He had little patience for what he considered useless extravagances.

Many of Hong Taiji's attitudes appear and are elaborated in his grandson, the Kangxi Emperor. Like his grandfather, much of Kangxi's time and attention was consumed by military matters. During his reign control over China proper was extended north and south. He subdued the Three Feudatories of South China after eight long years of fighting (1673–81), and defeated the Mongol prince Galdan in 1688–90, and 1696. And like his grandfather, he had little patience for wastefulness in funeral practices. To him, such extravagances also revealed the wasteful and perhaps effete character of the Han Chinese. On November 30, 1687, he issued an edict directed primarily against wasteful funeral practices by Han bannermen. These were the Chinese whose families had surrendered to the Manchus before the conquest, chiefly in the northeast, and who had been organized into a banner system that paralleled the Manchu banner system. Kangxi's concern was prompted by his having learned that some officials had financed elaborate funerals by serving as creditors for the common people.[65]

In the way of humankind, nothing is more important than filial piety. And yet these days the Chinese bannermen, when they are in mourning for a parent, invite friends and relatives to their house and drink and feast, gambling and playing cards, and

62 *Shier Chao Shengxun* 十二朝聖訓 Hong Taiji, February 9, 1628 (Taibei: Wenhai Chubanshe, 1965), 6.3a.

63 *Eminent Chinese*, 1.

64 Wakeman, 196.

65 For the background on performances at funerals, see the essays collected in David Johnson, ed., *Ritual Opera; Operatic Ritual* (Berkeley, CA: Publications of the Chinese Popular Culture Project, 1989).

amid all this celebration there is absolutely no semblance of a family in mourning. And when it comes to their mourning apparel, and the saddles and halters for their horses [which they use while observing mourning], though they are plain white [in conformity with mourning practices] they are decorated with flowers and pretty ornamentation. Funeral rituals are concerned with self-denial as a way of showing sincerity, and the clothes worn are to be coarse and unattractive. How then can it be proper to decorate them?[66]

As a frugal emperor, Kangxi was thus a potent antidote to the wastefulness that had characterized the reigns of the last Ming emperors. But perhaps because he was not himself Han Chinese, he did not have an insider's perspective on the nature and importance of the rituals as parts of the Confucian system. For him, filial piety had more to do with spontaneity and sincere feelings than with formal rules. "The affections and filial piety are a matter of spontaneity and naturalness, not of fixed rules and formal visits."[67] And when he did take up mourning in earnest, it was with eclecticism not seen in Chinese history.

Kangxi's thinking on mourning rituals coincided with many of the late Ming attitudes discussed in the preceding chapter. Like many thinkers from that time, he believed that rituals should express, not regulate, the emotions. And he believed that rituals could and should be changed, personalized, to make them better express emotions.

How much was Kangxi indebted, for these ideas, to late Ming thought? Did he learn this point of view from his advisors, who had themselves been influenced by late Ming attitudes? It is difficult to say, because the late Ming was looked down upon as a time of decadence, and the ideas developed during that time were blamed for the dynastic collapse. So neither Kangxi nor those in his government would have admitted to being influenced by late Ming thought. Yet it would seem that for all their attempts to "revive" Confucian culture, Kangxi's advisors could not but have been products of the time from which they and their families had emerged.

Kangxi's mourning for his grandmother

Kangxi's attitude toward death rituals is revealed in his observances for his beloved paternal grandmother, Xiaozhuang 孝莊 (1613–88). His mourning practices for her are discussed here in detail because they are keys to understanding his attitudes toward mourning, and to the changes he tacitly made in

66 *Kangxi qijuzhu* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1984), 1676–77.

67 As paraphrased in Jonathan D. Spence, *Emperor of China: Self-Portrait of K'ang-hsi [Kangxi]* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), 106.

the mourning system during the early Qing.[68] This woman, who was given the title Grand Empress Dowager, showered affection and guidance on the young Kangxi, whose own mother had died in 1663. When she fell ill, Kangxi refused to move from the side of her bed for thirty-five days.[69] After her death he grieved deeply.[70] Much to the surprise of those at court, in deciding how to mourn her he declared that he would observe a full twenty-seven months: that is, he would mourn her as one would a parent. Members of the Grand Secretariat, princes, top officials, and even common people petitioned the emperor to observe a period of only twenty-seven days of mourning, one day for every month of the traditional mourning period for a parent.[71] Such petitions were common, but they had always been directed at an emperor's mourning for his parents. Kangxi's observance of first-degree mourning for his grandmother was highly unusual, as many officials suggested to him. As the *Veritable Records* reported: "They memorialized, saying, 'Your majesty wishes to observe three years of mourning. We your officials have considered this, and feel that it is certainly a departure from normality. We therefore implore your majesty to observe the historical traditions.'"[72]

To this the emperor responded, "All the things that I do have sincerity (*cheng* 誠) at their base. Observing three years of mourning is perfectly in accord with my intentions. It is not because I wish to put on a false showing."[73] He further responded that he had done his own reading of history, and found that "since the Han funeral observances were made for twenty-seven days. Only Xiao Wen Di 孝文帝 [r. 471–99] wanted to observe three years of mourning.[74] I often read history and come upon this example, and it is praised. What I propose to do now is nothing more than a wise man of old did."[75]

68 For background on Xiaozhuang, see *Eminent Chinese*, 300–301. She was a Mongol princess and a descendant of the brother of Ghengis Khan. Kangxi's mourning for Xiaozhuang is discussed in Evelyn S. Rawski, "The Imperial Way of Death: Ming and Ch'ing [Qing] Emperors and Death Ritual," in Watson and Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, 248–49.

69 Spence, 105.

70 Nine days after her death (February 4, 1688), the *Veritable Records* reported that his grief was as yet undiminished, and he cried three times during the day. *Shengzu Ren Huangdi shilu* 聖祖仁皇帝實錄, *Qing shilu* 清實錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1986), 133.2a.

71 The traditional period of mourning for a paternal grandparent was one year.

72 *Shengzu shilu*, 133.3a. The Board of Rites had suggested three days in mourning clothes, and another twenty-seven days in mourning. Ibid., 132.9b.

73 *Shengzu shilu*, 133.3a. He mentions his desire to show sincerity again and again. See, e.g., *Shengzu shilu*, 133.4b.

74 Kangxi probably wanted to follow another aspect of Xiao Wen Di's career. This Wei emperor is famous for successfully integrating Han Chinese culture with that of China's nomadic conquerors, making his rule generally accepted by Northern Chinese elites. Kangxi faced a similar challenge. I am indebted to Yü Ying-shih for clarifying the importance of this emperor.

75 *Shengzu shilu*, 132.10b–11a.

Kangxi's second unorthodox practice following his grandmother's death was his change in the material of his mourning garment. Traditionally, he said, raw silk was used. But finding this too fancy for his taste, he sent an edict to the Board of Rites announcing that his mourning clothes should be made of cotton.[76] Actually, the traditionally prescribed fiber for three-year mourning was hemp, as it was for mourning worn for a paternal grandmother. But the Ming emperors had begun the practice of using raw silk. To Kangxi, though, the wearing of silk for mourning dress was counter to the Manchu spirit of frugality, and contrary to the proper attitudes of mourning.

Another observance that ran counter to tradition was his refusal to remove his grandmother's encoffined body from her palace before the new year. Officials petitioned him, reminding him that "our dynasty has always adhered to the notion that 'funerary matters are contained within the year, and they were not permitted to carry forward into new years.' Therefore the funeral service should be held within twenty-nine days."[77] But a quick removal of his grandmother's coffin was against his wishes, and his first two wives, deceased at young ages, had lingered longer.

> Twenty-nine days to the funeral is too short a time. The coffins of the two empresses remained longer, and therefore in the case of the grand empress dowager, we cannot observe the old rule of removing the coffin before the expiration of the year. A rapid funeral is not in accordance with the great principles. When it comes to old principles, there are ones we can observe, and ones we cannot observe.[78]

Two other unusual choices in Kangxi's mourning for his grandmother need to be mentioned, before we proceed to an analysis. First, on hearing of the death of his grandmother he cut off his queue completely. As already noted, this was a Manchu practice generally reserved for the death of a parent. Second, Kangxi chose to live in a shack outside the Qianqing gate. This practice had a Han rather than a Manchu provenance. Living in the mourning shed near the grave was indeed an orthodox practice – one that may have enjoyed a brief resurgence during the late Ming period.[79]

What are we to make of the nature and extent of Kangxi's mourning observances for his deceased grandmother? Scholars have suggested a partial explanation: that he sought to provide an example for his beloved but difficult

76 He intended the change to be permanent; that is, used in all cases of imperial mourning. "An edict to the Board of Rites. For my mourning clothes use cotton. The old rule [under the Ming] was that when there was a state mourning, those from the rank of Duke of the Imperial Clan and above wore raw silk. Now all those wearing mourning clothes will wear cotton." *Shengzu shilu*, 132.13b.

77 *Shengzu shilu*, 132.14b.

78 *Shengzu shilu*, 132.14b. See also Silas Wu, *Passage to Power: K'ang-hsi [Kangxi] and His Heir Apparent, 1661–1722* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 51–52.

79 *Ming shi*, 4392, 6573. At that time, a tumultuous period for officials at court (for example, persecution by the eunuch Wei Zhongxian 魏忠賢) may have contributed to this.

son, Inreng 胤礽.[80] Kangxi was obviously affected by this son's unfilial behavior, as well as by the unfilial behavior of his son Injy 胤祉, who in 1699 shaved his head before the expiration of the hundred-day mourning period declared for the death of his father's concubine.[81] But there were other reasons for the decisions Kangxi made about mourning.

A psychological dimension of Kangxi in mourning is plainly indicated by the extent to which he mourned his grandmother. Certainly if he wanted only to demonstrate the importance of filial piety, he would not have gone so far as to defy orthodox mourning practices of both Manchus and Chinese. He would not have violated Manchu precedent by cutting his queue and by leaving the body in the palace; and he would not have violated Chinese custom by insisting on a twenty-seven-month mourning period. Besides wishing to pay deep homage to an important person in his life, the mourning practices he observed seemed to be directed against feelings of guilt. He sought to punish himself – cutting his queue was the most obvious example of this. Thus we may ask whether his guilt surfaced over the death of his grandmother because he felt that despite all the attention he paid to the raising of his children, she had done a much better job in his upbringing than he had done with his own children.[82] Raising children correctly was vitally important because, as Kangxi himself well knew, the success of the dynasty depended on the quality of its emperors. If his successor were a weak link in the chain of imperial succession, it would endanger the dynasty and constitute a betrayal of the Manchu conquerors who had come before.[83]

80 Wu, 51–52. Evelyn S. Rawski, while not specifically mentioning Inreng, suggests Kangxi "used his grandmother as the object of his filial devotion, for the edification of his sons and subjects." Rawski, 248. Kangxi's uncle Tong Guogang 佟國綱 was killed in the campaign against Galdan. Kangxi forced himself to attend the funeral of this beloved uncle, though it seriously endangered his health. In this instance, too, according to Silas Wu, "despite this dramatic filial display [Kangxi's] message was lost on [Inreng]." Wu, 56.

81 Wu, 71. Citing *Shengzu shilu* 196.2b–3a.

82 Kangxi may also have felt tremendous guilt because although his grandmother had saved his life, he was not able to save hers. She lent the young Kangxi her bodyguards for protection when he was in a power struggle against Oboi. I am indebted to Jonathan Spence for this information and suggestion.

83 Thus Kangxi as an emperor seemed to put more faith in the quality of leaders than in establishing institutions to ensure that the dynasty stayed on proper course. This contrasts strongly with the first Ming emperor (see Chapter 2), who seemed almost to anticipate the declining quality of rulers and tried to counteract it with strong measures that would remain in place. This difference was represented in the world of mourning. Hongwu tried to regiment the rules of mourning, to ensure their observance by succeeding generations. Kangxi sought instead to use mourning (albeit as he interpreted it) to inculcate the virtue of filial piety in his sons. Perhaps each man looked to the precedents of his forebears. Hongwu knew from history that dynasties deteriorated because of their inferior rulers, and put faith in structures. Kangxi knew that Nurgaci had put in place a careful structure for the sharing of power among his sons, and yet immediately after his death Hong Taiji schemed to gain power. Thus Kangxi put more emphasis on cultivation.

Kangxi's mourning observances also demonstrate his desire to return to a simpler time and existence. This is suggested by his insistence on living in a tent outside the palace. Perhaps he blamed the behavior of his sons on their posh and luxurious lives. Though they had been schooled in Manchu military skills, perhaps the message of these skills, the importance of a good and simple life, had been lost on them.

Another conspicuous feature of Kangxi's mourning was its private nature. In contrast to the Qianlong Emperor, whose mourning for his beloved empress is discussed in Chapter 5, Kangxi issued few pronouncements on how the mourning should be observed in Beijing or throughout the empire. Though he publicized his mourning observances, he did not act as though it were the responsibility of others to share his very private feelings of grief. This notion of the emperor's private grief ran counter to the parallel conception of society. As noted in the preceding chapter, state mourning (*guo sang*) was a presumed accompaniment to the death of an emperor, empress, or empress dowager. In addition to China-wide observances, business at court would be suspended for a period of time.

Kangxi's mourning was not only private, it was largely personalized. He seemed to draw eclectically on Chinese and Manchu practices, and to draw strength from his in-between status, as Manchu leader of a Chinese state, to devise his own observances. From changing the fabric of the mourning gown, to observing first-degree mourning for a grandmother, to cutting the queue, to failing to remove the body, his changes dwarfed those of Hongwu.

As will become clearer, Kangxi made many changes in the system of mourning because to him mourning was not a system. Unlike Ming emperors, he did not see the mourning institution in terms of the parallel conception of society – as a coherent structure that bound the empire top and bottom. Mourning to him was an expression of filial piety as pure emotion, of the loving obedience of a son to his father. Thus we are not surprised that Kangxi devised his mourning practices to show the extent of his devotion, though they violated all precedent.

There is another and very important aspect of Kangxi's mourning for his grandmother that must be mentioned, because of its important precedent-setting power. When Kangxi declared his intent to mourn for twenty-seven months, what was left unsaid was that his observation of the deepest mourning would in many ways be mourning in name only. He made clear that his practices would not interfere with the business of government. He meant only that he would wear mourning clothes while in his private apartments (not while holding court) and that he would refrain from attending auspicious functions.

Mourning, he felt, should touch the emotions, but it should do so in a way that did not interfere with bureaucratic efficiency. By mourning his grand-

mother this way, Kangxi was also sending a message to those in his bureaucracy whose parents died. By adopting this point of view, however, Kangxi was breaking with tradition. While Ming emperors had largely been willing to sacrifice twenty-seven months of their officials' time for the sake of that orthodox notion of social organization, Kangxi, especially in the case of his entourage, was less willing to do so. The new direction that mourning was taking may best be illustrated by focusing on Kangxi's relationship with two of his top ministers, Zhu Shi 朱軾 (1665–1736) and Zhang Boxing 張伯行 (1652–1725).

Molding mourning in the inner circle: Zhu Shi and Zhang Boxing

The case of Zhu Shi's mourning was precedent-setting, and was referred to by subsequent emperors.[84] Zhu Shi had come from an educated family, which by the time of his youth had lapsed into financially strained circumstances. His grandfather was Zhu Chongsui 朱充遂, who as a youth had displayed considerable scholarly promise, and yet preferred to devote his life to the study of metaphysics. But he maintained a strong commitment to his local area, and in famine years bankrupted himself in supporting his county and by helping over two thousand families avoid having to flee.[85] Zhu Chongsui died soon after the birth of his son Zhu Jiguang 朱極光 (the father of Zhu Shi), and the young Jiguang went to great pains to support his mother. His brief biography in the local gazetteer for Gaoan 高安, Jiangxi indicates a level of filial piety that went beyond mere rhetoric.

> Zhu Jiguang (Courtesy name: North Slope) was the son of [Zhu] Chongsui, and the father of [Zhu] Shi. As a youth he was fatherless, and had to rely on public granaries for his mother's sustenance. He would keep a childlike smile on his face, and manage to obtain delicacies for his mother, lest she realize their difficulties or his state of exhaustion. By nature he was frugal and honest, and his entire life was without hasty words or sudden anger. Although opposed, he would not enter into an altercation.
>
> After [Zhu] Shi became an official [his father] built an ancestral temple, set aside sacrificial fields, established a free school, engraved a family register, repaired the family graves [which, with no one to manage them, had fallen into disrepair], and repaired

84 *Da Qing huidian shili* 大清會典事例 1886 1200卷 (Beijing Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1991), 138.780.

85 His biography in the local gazetteer reads: "Zhu Chongsui, (Courtesy name: Bamboo Pavilion), at age twenty he abandoned preparation for an official career, and took as his profession a total commitment to metaphysics. In [a famine] year Chongsui bankrupted himself in bestowing alms throughout the community, helping over two thousand families avoid fleeing. They sought to recognize his good deed, but he strongly declined their overtures. In his early years he had problems producing an heir. The townspeople prayed, saying: 'Mr. Zhu has lived his life in goodness, so let his lack of an heir come to an end.' He unexpectedly produced two sons, Chaoshou and Chaojin. Both had a reputation for talent but hid their virtue [i.e., refused to serve]. [Zhu Chongsui's] grandson [Zhu] Shi became a Grand Secretary." *Gaoan xianzhi* 高安縣志 28 + 1卷 1871 17.6a.

grounds and bridges that had collapsed. With tireless effort he pursued goodness, and until old age he was unwearied. He considered that what he himself did not undertake would be undertaken by his posterity. It is true indeed.[86]

Zhu Shi had come from a family in which self-sacrifice had been primary in importance. As his father's emphasis on the reconstruction of the ancestral temple indicates, it was also a family that valued the importance of ritual. From the perspective of his family, Zhu Shi's achievement of a high official position was both a source of pride and a source of much needed financial assistance. It was the endpoint of the sacrifices they had endured to provide him with an education. In Zhu Shi's philosophical background, we see the imprint of his early life, because both to his students and in his personal life he emphasized a strong commitment to ritual as a means of transforming the natural disposition.[87]

But when Zhu Shi's father died, in 1721, his two competing roles, that of filial son and obedient minister, came completely into collision. This was largely because the Kangxi Emperor, who only superficially subscribed to the parallel conception of society, saw no reason to permit Zhu Shi to return home and observe the traditional mourning period. During April and May of 1721, Zhu Shi's repeated requests to return for mourning were met with a stone-faced reply by Kangxi. Zhu Shi's memorials from this period evidence his heartfelt desire, and the very real and emotional conflict of interest he was experiencing.

His father died March 8, and it was not until April 15 that Zhu Shi received notice of his death at the capital. He submitted a request to arrange mourning to the Board of Rites, but the Board was preoccupied with the preparations for the sixtieth anniversary of Kangxi's reign, so his request was never forwarded to the emperor. On April 25, the Board of Personnel memorialized the emperor that according to regulations he should leave his post and arrange mourning. On April 26 the Grand Secretariat recommended approval. Receiving no reply from the emperor, the Grand Secretariat on April 30 then again memorialized. The emperor's rescript read only: "Observe mourning at the capital." When Zhu read the order, "his own sickness got worse. His head grew dizzy and his cough would not cease. During the day he would eat only a half a cup of porridge, and on his face the bones began to show."[88]

The strength of Zhu's physiological reaction, both to the death of his father and to his inability to return and perform his filial obligations, suggests the emotional difficulty of his predicament. But it also strikes deep chords in the system of orthodox mourning practices. As J. J. M. de Groot suggested, in the observance of the funeral rites the filial son had to endure the discomfort to

86 *Gaoan xianzhi*, 17.20a.
87 *Eminent Chinese*, 188.
88 Zhu Han 朱瀚 and Zhu Ling 朱齡, *Zhu Wenduan gong nianpu* 朱文端公年譜1873, 19b–20a.

which his father's corpse had been subjected.[89] For example, he was to sleep with a clod of earth as a pillow. Thus we are not surprised to read that Zhu ate only a bowl of porridge per day (because this was the stipulated amount in Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals*). Nor are we surprised to read that the bones showed on his face: this was an intended reference to the fate of his father's corpse – so there was something orthodox even in his sickness. Despite the orthodox elements in this description of the bereaved son, it is obvious from the intensity of his illness that Zhu's suffering was genuine and extreme. On May 4 he again memorialized the emperor, asking permission to return.

Your official's father Zhu Jiguang died . . . of his illness, on the eighth of March, 1721. Although I have memorialized the Board through the proper channels, I was given the response: "Zhu Shi must observe mourning at his post." When your official read the order he was moved to sadness. Tears began to fall. How could I dare to take the matter up again? To do so would be to make excuses, and to annoy the imperial intelligence. And yet your official's father was pure in his adherence to the importance of loyalty and filial piety. He taught your official how to be an official. If there were any omissions or oversights he would be sure to upbraid me. On two occasions, once he had retired from his post, he was invited to return to work. For several months he worked with alacrity. He did not wish to become a lazy official.

Your official has certainly not begun to fulfill the way of sons. When I received the death announcement I was alarmed and perturbed. Only with difficulty was I able to think of it. Your majesty's filiality governs the myriad nations under heaven. And your people and officials are alike bathed in [your] virtues, and seek the transformations of the [Confucian] way. Your official is also a son. If I should be ambitious to remain in office, in the end not attending personally to the mourning and funeral preparations for my father, how could my heart be at peace? As to being outside my post, these matters I am afraid I have no experience with. And I have never stolen even a day's leisure. How much more so now that my person has been invested with the position of a high minister, and favored with special grace of an added measure? How could I dare, under pretext, to scheme after peace? It is only the natural relationship of father and son that makes the pain hard to endure.

It is the same case with your official's mother, Madame Leng. As she approaches her eighth decade of life, she lies sick on her bed. This makes your official's heart all the more grievous. Now she lies sick with a suffering soul, practically at her last gasp 奄奄一息.

Keeping me at my post necessarily brings about the dissolution of the system by which the official shoulders duties to both ruler and parents 君親兩負. This is the reason for which I am begging your majesty to pity your official with his saddened insides, and graciously permit him to return to his native place to observe mourning. Plans to control life and death are as feeble as a drop or a grain. Your official in his vast confusion forgets this, and ignorantly displays his feelings, and humbly begs your majesty, who is profound in perspicacity, to grant that what he requests be permitted.[90]

89 J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China* . . . (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1894; Southern Materials Center, rep., 1982), II.50.

90 *Zhu Wenduan Gong nianpu*, 20a–b.

And yet again permission was denied him by the emperor, whose rescript read only: "A decision has already been made; let the appropriate board be so informed." The text of the memorial demonstrated Zhu Shi's sense of personal debt to his father, who had been so deeply committed to filial piety. It also showed the extent to which Zhu Shi and Kangxi had vastly different assumptions about mourning. From Zhu's very traditional perspective, correct mourning evidences the parallel conception of society: "Good officials," he said, "came from being good sons." He also said: "Keeping me at my post necessarily brings about the dissolution of the system by which officials shoulder duties to both rulers and parents."

On May 14, he again memorialized, begging that if he could not be given mourning leave, at least he should be put on a military assignment.[91] As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, there was only one instance in which, traditionally, scholars were permitted to refrain from mourning: when there was a valid military need. And yet, as Chapter 2 notes, by the end of the Ming the military exception had fallen into disuse. Zhu Shi was thus reviving an old but long discarded principle.

Throughout Zhu Shi's succeeding memorials to the throne (there would yet be several more) we see him ask for, at the very least, the right to return only to bury his father; but even this is denied him. These memorials indicate some of the ways in which Zhu Shi's not mourning his father differed from cases in the Ming. First, Kangxi, unlike Wanli in the Ming, did not have to argue strenuously that he could not be without his top official for even a day, or that the business they were involved with at the time could not be left unfinished. Second, the term used so frequently in the pre-Qing period, *duoqing* (the cutting short of the emotions) to indicate an official who was avoiding mourning, was not used to describe Zhu Shi's remaining at his post. Mourning leave for a top-level official would never again be a presumed right. Third, we see Kangxi's imprint in his order that Zhu Shi observe mourning "at his post." By this he suggested that Zhu mourn his father in the same way that he himself had mourned his grandmother: in a personal way, that would not interfere with the operation of the bureaucracy.

Kangxi's order that Zhu mourn at his post was thus part of his redefinition of the system of mourning. Traditionally, for the official, to mourn was at least partially by definition to return home. Though in the Ming crisis Zhang Juzheng was permitted to wear mourning at court functions, he was not told to "observe mourning at his post," an assertion that to the Ming mind would appear a contradiction in terms.

What became of Zhu Shi, following this severe test of his loyalty? Although not given the military assignment he had requested, he was, in 1721, sent to

91 *Zhu Wenduan Gong nianpu*, 20b; *Eminent Chinese*, 188.

Shansi to work in drought and famine relief. He continued as a loyal official to Kangxi until the latter's death the following year, and to the two emperors who followed him. When his own time came, he received a personal visit from the emperor, whom he had served as a personal tutor. Extremely ill, but still committed to the proper observance of ritual, Zhu donned his court robes and left his house to greet the emperor. He died the next day.[92] Imperial solicitude for Zhu continued after this loyal official's death: his son would eventually be ordered to move his family grave, at public expense.[93]

The new mood of the empire is evident also in the relationship between Kangxi and Zhang Boxing. As an official, Zhang Boxing was interested personally not only in his own ability to perform the mourning rites correctly, but also in the rectification of ritual practices among the common people. And yet a close look at his career suggests that his interests were molded by the Kangxi Emperor, so that he turned away from general concern with popular ritual practices. He came to focus instead on the avoidance of extravagance among the common people – a concern that, as we have discussed, fit generally better with Kangxi's concerns. We see also that as Zhang Boxing, in his public life, was molded to deemphasize concern with ritual, in his private life that concern remained strong, and perhaps even increased in intensity.

Born in 1652, Zhang Boxing was twelve *sui* when the Kangxi Emperor, his junior by two years, came to the throne.[94] Very early in life he became a follower of the Song school of Neo-Confucianism, and at age seven began to read the works of the Cheng brothers, and also of Zhu Xi.[95] He was deeply saddened by the death of his mother, in the autumn of 1664, when he was fourteen *sui*. His outpouring following her death was deeply emotional, and filial. "He howled and called and stomped the feet with grief that touched the bones. Although he had not reached manhood, he still had this level of filial piety."[96]

Perhaps because of the early experience with the death and mourning of his mother, Zhang Boxing placed a great deal of emphasis on the importance of the correct performance of rituals. He believed, for example, that public funds should go toward the burial of those who died without families, and that officials should work to find ways to bury unclaimed corpses. In 1685 when he was passing through Hua 滑 city in Henan, along the roadway he saw the corpses of people who had died of starvation.

92 *Eminent Chinese*, 189.
93 Memorial of Sailengge, n.d. 塞楞額 (2職官硃批49).
94 Zhang Shizai 張師載 and Zhang Shishi 張師拭, *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu* 張清恪公年譜, 上.3a.
95 *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.2b.
96 *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.3b.

"They should be buried," he said to the people on the land.

"But the corpses belong to no one," they answered, "and we are afraid they may bring forth evil. What's more, who will pay for it?" At this, Boxing bought coffins, and ordered that the village headmen report to the provincial capital, and give them encoffinings.[97]

Early in his official career, there were other instances in which Zhang Boxing manifested this desire to help the unburied find permanent rest. In 1690, when there was a great famine, he and his father supervised the dispersal of grain to the hungry.

Those who managed to survive [because of the Zhangs' efforts] could not be counted. . . . All those who died and were not encoffined, and all those who could not be buried because of lack of funds, were given money; and those who could not afford to pay them back had their bonds [of obligation] burned. In the whole prefecture tens of thousands of people offered testimonies to their virtue. They also erected a tablet outside the gate of the family house, which read "father and son are virtuous and good to the masses of the people."[98]

But thereafter Zhang Boxing was much less inclined to work in a definite way for the burial of neglected corpses. He confined himself instead to the criticism of extravagance and waste in funeral practices. Extravagance, he argued, was the chief reason that people left the bodies of their parents unburied. Many were waiting for adequate resources to provide an elaborate funeral.[99] It is true, he argued, that Mencius himself had spent a great deal on his mother's funeral, and believed "the superior man will on no account be stingy toward his parent." But Zhang pointed out that spending huge sums on the coffin and grave clothing, as Mencius had, was justified because it was natural that a son should want to keep his parent protected from the soil. But there was no such justification for other sorts of wastefulness.[100] "The niggardliness of which Mencius spoke dealt with the quality of the inner and outer

97 *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.8a.

98 *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.10b.

99 Zhang Boxing 張伯行, *Chi jin hunjia sangzang huashe* 飭禁婚嫁喪葬華奢, *Zhengyi Tang wenji* 正誼堂文集 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed.), 5.61. Here Zhang betrays the regional bias of his family background. Were he more familiar with southern practices, he would know that the chief reason for leaving the coffin unburied in most of China was adherence to the doctrines of geomancy.

100 *Chi jin hunjia sangzang huashe*, 5.61. Mencius had his mother with him in the state of Qi when she died. He had a coffin constructed for her there, which he used to transport her body back to Lu, for burial in the family grave. He commissioned Chong Yu to oversee the construction of the coffin. Cong Sui later asked him whether he thought that perhaps he had acted hastily and extravagantly in selecting such fine and thick woods. Mencius responded that there were no requirements in antiquity on the size or shape of the coffin, so why should he adhere to any?

coffins, and of the sets of clothing; it did not deal with matters of what could be called wastefulness."[101]

Zhang Boxing also became less concerned with the performance of correct rituals among the people. In 1703, for example, he witnessed a terrible famine, in which he saw corpses "strewn along the roadway." Yet he made no attempt to do what he had done in the earlier days of his career: he did not work to get public funding to pay for the burial of the corpses, nor did he donate his own money for that cause.[102]

Hence, it would appear, given this change of behavior, that Zhang Boxing was bending to Kangxi's will. When Zhang was appointed governor of Fujian in 1707, the emperor, perhaps knowing Zhang's proclivity for Confucian reform, as well as the extent to which very un-Confucian practices took place in Fujian, admonished his official: "Each place has different customs, don't try to change them. Just make sure your area stays peaceful."[103]

Zhang Boxing's personality bowed under the weight of an emperor whose advice conflicted with the accepted conception of a Confucian monarch. As Jonathan Spence has noted, the full story of Zhang Boxing's life does not make sense, unless we factor in the strong psychological dimension.[104] In his life we see, as Spence notes, instance after instance of paranoid delusion, and the major ones seem to center around his incorruptibility, and the moral shortcomings he saw in others.

The prime example is his accusations in 1710 and 1711 of misconduct against Gali 喝禮 (d. 1714), a high-level Manchu official who was loyal to Kangxi but negligent in other aspects of his duty.[105] Though Zhang certainly had reasons for accusing Gali of misconduct, his vehemence can only be accounted for by the fact that Gali was everything Zhang Boxing was not. Whereas Zhang was known for his attention to the common people, Gali was known for oppressing them. Zhang was known for his filial piety and attention to the rites, and Gali was known for ignoring his family. In 1714 he was accused by his own mother of attempting to poison her – he committed suicide after being judged "worthy

101 *Chi jin hunjia sangzang huashe*, 5.61.

102 *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.20b–21a. His reluctance to spend his own money might have been because much of it was already used up.

103 *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.29b. Quoted in Jonathan Spence, "Chang Po-hsing [Zhang Boxing] and the K'ang-hsi [Kangxi] Emperor," *Ch'ing-shih wen-t'i* 1, no. 8 (May 1968): 5. Zhang's "Essay on Not Protracting the Burial of a Parent" stresses that an early burial brings peace to the deceased and is in conformance with the dictates of antiquity. "The ancients encoffined after the third day, and buried after the third month. This is probably because they thought the deceased would achieve peace when put in the ground." Zhang Boxing 張伯行, *Qin sang bu ke jiu ting shuo* 親喪不可久停説, *Zhengyi Tang wenji* 正誼堂文集, 9.12a.

104 Spence, "Chang Po-hsing," 7.

105 *Eminent Chinese*, 268.

of the lingering death."[106] Perhaps the strain on Zhang's psyche came from his own conflicts over serving a regime that did not live up to his own thoroughgoing standards.

For our purposes the most important lesson of the story of Zhang Boxing was that attempts on the part of officials to reform the popular practices of an area would no longer be encouraged. In this balance between Confucian and bureaucrat, the balance tipped toward bureaucrat. If one adds to this that the balance between serving family and serving the state shifted toward the state, a picture emerges of the new kind of official in the Kangxi reign: one devoted to the emperor over all else, and less committed to the Confucian reform of the state.[107] The stories of Zhang Boxing and Zhu Shi illustrate the new atmosphere at court, and suggest Kangxi himself was decisive in bringing it about.

Three options for loyal officials

Kangxi's alteration of the system of mourning and his effective destruction of the parallel conception of society left sons of elite families – the group most likely to consider and be accepted for government service – with a limited number of options. First, they could accept his terms, be faithful to him above all else, and sacrifice loyalty to their parents. Second, they could meet his terms externally, and yet do their best to maintain an inner loyalty to their parents. This latter position was not wholly at odds with what Kangxi himself preferred, because he believed that mourning should be private; but it was at odds with traditional Confucian mourning observances, because these by definition were supposed to be public, and necessitated the return of the mourner to his native place. Third, they could simply elect not to serve, to become hermits and mourn as they chose.

It was not, of course, only for the chance to mourn properly that sons of the elite faced these decisions. And yet, mourning was in some ways at the heart of the choices they faced. The act of mourning tied people to their pasts:

106 *Eminent Chinese*, 268. One wonders also whether by striking out against Gali, Zhang Boxing was in a way striking out against Kangxi. Perhaps Zhang criticized one who was in many ways like the emperor because he could not criticize the emperor himself.

107 Another indication of the change in mood is the decline in officials canonized for their filial piety. Although I have not investigated this systematically, it seems that stories like that of Lü Yuan (1418–62), a Ming official who sacrificed greatly for his parents and was canonized, do not appear in the Qing. See *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 1017–18.

Instead, it appears to me that the early Qing government emphasized the *fengdian* 封典 system, by which it awarded posthumous honors to the deceased parents of its officials – in a sense co-opting filial devotions. For expansions in the system, see *Qing shi gao*, 68.2719 (1670), and Memorial of Zhang Wujun 張鳴鈞, March 29, 1736 (2禮儀奏摺18紅1). There are many surviving memorials in which officials request these honors for their parents; and officials seem to be very anxious to obtain them.

whether to their individual pasts – their families, loyalty to their fathers who had served the Ming – or their collective memory of what they perceived to be a more Confucian past. In the early Qing a proliferation of poems and other forms of writing lamented the current state of funeral practices and looked back to a more Confucian past, in which people understood the letter and spirit of the rites, and how the dead should be mourned. Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 wrote the first of his twenty "miscellaneous poems" on mourning in the Eastern Han.

In Luoyang there were substantial customs,	東京厚風俗
a scholar's conduct was molded in the imperial academy.	士行本學校
He invariably gave priority to his parents' personal care,	必先親其親
and thereby made the people know a model to imitate.	使民知則傚
At that time they stressed funeral rites,	於時重喪記
close relatives observed each other's mourning periods.	期功相答校
At the correct times they left office,	至或自解官
when in mourning they followed their Confucian obligations.	居憂立名教
What about the people of today?	拉何今之人
Their mothers die and they do not observe mourning.	母死不作孝
They reject sackcloth and hempen clothes,	舍爾苴絰製
their faces blush with wine and meat.	有靦酒肉貌
Those who have died in their beds are nonetheless orphaned,	首丘死者孤
while even the leopard finds his mountain burial.	首山死者豹
The orphaned people do not return and mourn,	鮮民之不奔
how can this cover spring and pit?	曷以掩泉窖
Who can bring such calamities,	誰哉生厲階
when an official career is skillfully advanced?[108]	士路巧騰踔

The last line of this poem is in a sense a commentary on the rest of it. The poem focuses on the breakdown in the proper observance of the funeral rites to suggest how they had changed, how much more people of the age had become careerists, not leaving office to observe mourning, and putting official service over family service. And yet hidden also in this poem is a criticism of the Manchu regime. The poet dares not attack the Manchu government, and yet in his yearning for a more Confucian past in which truly filial sons were more highly valued such a criticism is implied.

In the mourning practices of elites in the Kangxi period we see examples of those who chose one of the three possible paths just mentioned. Of those who were, in a sense, "converted" to Kangxi's thinking, a good example is Li

108 Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊, "Za shi 雜詩," *Qing shi duo* 清詩鐸26卷 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1960, 1983), 26.842. On the translation of "Dongjing" as Luoyang, see *Zhongguo gujin diming da cidian* 中國古今地名大辭典 (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1931, 1981), 483.

Guangdi 李光地 (1642–1718). Li was from Fujian, a southeastern province that came under Qing rule only after the suppression of the Three Feudatories in the 1670s. Li made a deep impression on Kangxi by submitting a memorial to him, sealed in a ball of wax, in which he outlined a plan for a Manchu invasion of Fujian.[109] This show of loyalty left a lasting impression on Kangxi, who thereafter trusted Li Guangdi unquestioningly.

When his father died, in 1677, Li was just about to take up a position as reader in the Hanlin Academy and was obliged to delay going to his post, to observe a period of mourning. At this time in his career his services were not that important to Kangxi, and he was able to observe the mourning rituals meticulously. "From the time he received notice of the death, his returning home and observation of the mourning rites were in complete harmony with the ritual classics."[110] In 1694, however, when he was serving as junior vice-president of the Board of War, with a concurrent appointment as director of education in Zhili, he received news of his mother's death, and an edict was sent down that read: "Li Guangdi is not permitted to return to his native place. Let him leave office, but observe mourning at the capital."[111]

Li acquiesced rather quickly to the emperor's order, and this angered a number of censors at court. Three submitted memorials impeaching him for not observing mourning.[112] But the emperor strongly rebuked them for their censorial impeachments of Li, and they were silenced.

The story of Li Guangdi is one of an official who was effectively molded by Kangxi. One key difference between him and Zhang Boxing, or Zhu Shi, is that the transformation appears to have taken place with little internal conflict. Part of the difference may have been the selection, and self-selection, process that brought him to government service. Li was able to win Kangxi's loyalty in the first place because of his skill at manipulating loyalties: he very skillfully played off the rebels in Fujian and Kangxi against each other, vying for a situation that would leave him in a beneficial position regardless of the outcome of the rebellion.[113] Given a personality like Li's, which saw loyalty as a kind of *realpolitik*, one can see why he so readily sacrificed loyalty to his mother to win the emperor's favor.

Li Guangdi's response to his critics was to try to avoid criticism by using his mourning time at the capital to edit works of the Song Confucianists on mourning. Studying mourning, for him, became in a sense a substitute for

109 *Eminent Chinese*, 473–74.

110 Li Qingfu 李清馥, *Rongcun pulu hekao* 榕村譜錄合考, *Rongcun quanshu*, 上.14b.

111 Li Qingfu, 下.4b.

112 Li Qingzhi 李清植, *Li Wenzhen Gong nianpu* 李文真公年譜, (1825), 上.56a. The three censors were surnamed Yang, Shen, and Peng.

113 *Eminent Chinese*, 473–74. Another example is his skill in avoiding participation in the struggle among the sons of Kangxi for the throne. Ibid., 475.

practicing it. As Fang Chao-ying suggests in his biographical essay on Li, this was possibly a very conscious action on his part to improve the general perception of him both as a filial son and as a follower of the Song school of Neo-Confucianism.[114] It fit practically with his role in government. He could remain observing mourning at the capital, so that he would be available to advise Kangxi if necessary. And he could spend his days doing the kind of scholarly work that Kangxi was attempting to promote. On the surface, at least, it appeared to resolve all contradictions between service to family and service to the state: except that his "mourning observances" were purely intellectual, and geographically very removed from his family; they were also far removed from the orthodox Confucian conception of mourning obligations.[115]

The second group of officials in the early Qing maintained a sharper sense of loyalty to their families and genuinely wanted to observe mourning for their parents. For them, the way to resolve that dilemma was to accept outwardly the new rules of the state, while inwardly maintaining a sense of devotion. They struggled, whenever possible, to reconcile the competing demands of parents and emperor.

In one sense, the state's heavy restriction on the system of mourning – for example, keeping officials from returning home – severely restricted many officials' ability to mourn their parents. And yet in some sense it also gave the individuals in mourning greater freedom. While the state controlled the all-important outer parameters of mourning – such as the time spent away from the post – it effectively relinquished control over many of the details. The clothes one wore, the texts one used, the observances one chose, all these things became subject to individual choice.

In the absence of the state's engagement with and participation in the system of mourning, these bureaucrats sometimes came to reconcile the competing demands placed on them by agreeing with Kangxi that mourning was at base a personal affair. Or they maintained its more traditional aspect by adopting a different notion of what "public" entailed. The public sphere of their mourning had less to do with the government, and more to do with the sphere of family and friends. For Zhu Shi, for example, the sphere of determining proper mourning obligations was not the state, as the center of religious authority, but

114 *Eminent Chinese*, 474.

115 Of the other officials who used writing on mourning as a way of practicing it, two more may be added: Xu Qianxue 徐乾學 (1631–94), and Guo Xiu 郭琇 (1638–1715). In 1676 Xu edited a huge collection of essays on mourning rites, *Duli tongkao* 讀禮通考 (120卷). See also essays by him in *Huangchao jingshi wenbian*, 63.1a–b, 28a–29b. Guo, who was a political rival of Xu's, was too wedded to his political position to mourn his parents properly, but managed to write on the subject. Guo Xiu, *Huaye shugao* 華野疏稿 (Siku Quanshu Zhenben 3), vol. 130. See *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1971), 1223–24.

the scholarly group. It was with his disciples that collective decisions were made about how to mourn.[116]

Zhang Boxing, as already discussed, was molded by Kangxi to care less for reform of the rites among the common people. He nonetheless maintained the importance of observing rituals in his private life. When Guo Tianjin 郭天錦, an old schoolmate of Zhang's and fellow Fujianese who had served as the Magistrate of Shangshui, 商水 Henan, died penniless, Zhang donated two hundred taels to pay for his burial.[117] Although he had long given up working for the public reform of popular customs, he still had a strong sense that in his private sphere of family and friends, the rituals were of the utmost importance.[118]

In his relationship with his son, Zhang Shizai 張師載 (1695–1716), we see both the influence of Zhang Boxing's ideas about mourning, and his desire to maintain strong familial ties. As his father lay sick in bed, "Shizai walked around him in confusion, with no means of helping him 徬徨無措." His condition worsened, and the doctor said that medication would be useless. "[Zhang] Shizai cried and said: 'How could Father so suddenly come to this defeat?' His father answered, 'It was not something you could have prevented.' And then his mouth filled with phlegm, and Shizai was ordered to quickly write down his last words."[119]

In his own career, Zhang Shizai did his best to continue the work of his father. When he was assigned to service in Jiangxi province, he was disgusted to discover the extent to which people there believed in geomancy. Their practice was to bury the corpse in a preliminary location, and after three years to open the grave and examine the bones. Those that were still red were reburied in the same location and those that had already become black were moved to the permanent grave. The process was repeated every year until all the bones were in the new location.[120] Zhang Boxing, true to the tradition of his

116 See, for example, the many writings he edited on how the dead should be mourned, which were to serve as handbooks. He edited the *Xiao jing* 孝經, *Yi li jielue* 儀禮節略 (20卷), *Dadai li ji* 大戴禮記 (13卷), *Li ji zuanyan* 禮記纂言 (30卷), *Lüshi sili yi* 呂氏四禮翼, *Yanshi jiaxun* 顏氏家訓 (2卷), *Wengong jiafan* 文公家範 (10卷).

117 Guo was from Jinjiang 晉江, Fujian, and had achieved the *Jinshi* in 1670. *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.36b.

118 Another manifestation of his privatization of mourning was his decision in 1706 to edit family codes for home ritual observances. *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu*, 上.22a.

119 *Zhang Qingke Gong nianpu* 下.43b. Zhang Shizai and another son of Zhang Boxing's, Zhang Shishi 張師拭, spent many pages describing their father's last illness and death, in Zhang Boxing's *nianpu*.

120 The process is described in a poem by Chen Zi 陳梓, "Washing the Sinews":

> .....
>
> The red ones returned to the original mound,
> the black ones moved to a new grave.
> New grave, new colors, some not changing to red,
> move again, wash again, still no end to poverty.
>
> .....

father, worked to eliminate these practices. In the summer of 1746 he memorialized the throne to limit them, and found a willing ear in the Qianlong Emperor, who was then on the throne. At that time, however, the receptiveness toward limiting such practices came more from new sensibilities than from Confucian beliefs. Thus a later generation of the Zhang family was able to accomplish something that had been impossible under the Kangxi Emperor.

The third group of elites in the early Qing was made up of those individuals who simply declined to serve. Freed from the obligations of government service, they were thus able to practice mourning however they wished. Many in this group came from families that had served the Ming, and their not serving was a kind of mourning all its own. Some flatly declined to serve. Others worked to have their names excluded from the eligible list for the special examinations that were designed to woo scholars to serve the Qing state.

It is not surprising to learn that many in this group spent their time writing on mourning rituals. But what is astonishing is the extent to which their disengagement from the state, as well as the state's disengagement from the system of mourning, permitted them to construct their own systems of mourning.

Mao Qiling 毛奇齡 (1623–1716), a native of Xiaoshan 蕭山, Zhejiang, was one of the most innovative thinkers who sought to revise the system of mourning. Though he served the Qing, he did so in an almost halfhearted way, and soon retired, complaining of rheumatism.[121] Even before his retirement, he generally refused to offer suggestions to the emperor on the conduct of ritual matters.

> When I arrived at court I had thought to instruct officials in the correct rituals, but I became an official too late in life, and moreover the Son of Heaven who sat on the throne was wise in the way of music and rites, so what could I teach him?[122]

There were elements in the funeral practices he saw at court that irritated him, because he thought they should be done otherwise. But in each case he kept silent.

"Xi jin xing 洗筋行," reprinted in *Qing shi duo* 清詩鐸 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1960, 1983), 842.

In cultures that practice reburial, three years is often the interval people wait before exhuming the remains. Perhaps this is one explanation for the duration of the original mourning period in China. In modern Greece people still practice exhumation and cleansing of the bones. Traditionally, this was performed after three years, but because of preservatives in the modern diet, bodies take longer to decay, and many in Greece delay exhumation of the body. Maori also exhume after three years.

121 *Eminent Chinese*, 563–64.

122 *Sangli wushuo pian*, 2b.

When all the relatives, princes, and great officials sent off the funeral cortege of the Empress to the Zunhua 遵化 tomb, crying and walking haphazardly into the desert, at that time I [had some points I wished to raise] but in the end I dared not speak my mind, because I considered that the court rituals could not be prepared for [by officials]. (His note: In ancient times there were no rituals [specifically] for the feudal lords and for the Son of Heaven and this text also dares not mention them. Only what concerns the people's burial practices, and the ways they are habituated to ancient rituals [can be discussed].)[123]

In ritual matters, then, Mao simply did not want to have anything to do with the state. He did not see it as his role to correct the ritual practices at court, and he also saw the state as removed from correcting his ritual practices.[124]

Mao Qiling's achievement was the construction of a new, rationalized system of mourning. In his huge work on the mourning rituals, *A Clarification of Mourning Rituals* (*Sangli wushuo pian* 喪禮吾說篇) he examined all possible ritual observances, and carefully set out new recommendations on how rituals should be performed. His strategy in each case was to explain the ritual itself, explore its provenance, observe the extent to which it conformed with proper emotion (*qing* 情) and with reason (*li* 理). Those that were found illogical were expunged.

Below is a translation of an entire discussion of a particular ritual requirement from Mao's work. It is representative of Mao's thinking as a whole, and illustrates his method for devising a new mourning system. It deals with an old rule that found its way into Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals*. The rule read, "A man does not die in the hands of a woman, a woman does not die in the hands of a man." This rule had long been used to keep one on the brink of death away from his or her spouse, or away from a child or a child's spouse. To Mao Qiling, this was a rule that made no sense. Besides illustrating his ways of thinking and writing, the passage reveals how much suffering a literal observance of the mourning rites could entail.

"A Man does not die in the hands of a woman; a woman does not die in the hands of a man." There is a [related] passage that reads: "There should be four assistants, each sits, supporting the body; these are called 'body supporters (*chiti* 持體)'. Each one supports one limb. This is suggested in the *Da Dai Commentary* [on the *Record of Rites*], in which it is said that when Zeng Zi [a disciple of Confucius] was sick, Zeng Yuan was sent to support his head, and Zeng Hua was sent to support his feet. Thus when the text says "should not die in the hands of [someone of the opposite sex]" it is referring to the hands of the body supporters. It means that men's hands should support men's bodies and women's hands should support women's bodies. Men and women should not be permitted to handle each other.

123 *Sangli wushuo pian*, 3a.

124 As for his statement that in ancient times "there were no rituals [specifically] for the feudal lords and for the Son of Heaven," he made this because he rejected as forgeries dating from the Warring States period the *Li ji*, the *Zhou li*, and the *Yi li*.

[The book] *Xi Gu Liang zhuan* 襲穀梁傳 has some words which may explain it. And *Sang da ji* 喪大記 [a section of the *Record of Rites*] also interprets it. And yet, these do not use the explanation of those who support the corpse. And yet they do interpret its importance as the separation of the sexes. Mr. Zheng [author of *Sangfu Zhengshi xue* 喪服鄭氏學] also mentions it, saying its purpose is to avoid indecencies (*xie* 褻) being taken with the dying person's body. Now having to protect against indecencies in the case of someone who is on the verge of death is really too much; as is conceiving of such a problem. The woman involved may happen to be the dying man's wife, and mother of the deceased's children. A wife sending her husband off in death is not an indecency. This makes no sense. If you keep them apart before death how do you justify burying them in the same grave? Now as for the case of a son and his wife [in the case in which one would be with a parent of the son, of the opposite sex] in the care of the ailments, the sickness and the pain, these participants are greatly needed. But then on one morning to arbitrarily draw a line and say that contact between them must cease, this is absolutely at odds with emotion (*qing* 情) and with reason (*li* 理). And these are also not the words of one who knew the *li*.

According to the *li*, at an advanced age husband and wife may share the same bedroom. When an old man goes out, his wife should accompany him. How then can [separating them when death approaches] be considered serving them properly in accord with Zhou dynasty practices? The Barons of Lu had separate compounds for their womenfolk. And in olden times sixty men and women might live in the same building. But for yours or my living situation there are hardly thirty together under one roof, and we would never dare to think [of indecencies being taken with the corpse]. It was in such circumstances that people worried about indecencies being taken with the corpse by non-relatives, and guarded against it. Now we only deal with people who are close relatives.

Huang Yi 黃嶧, an old official from the Ming dynasty Board of Rites, came to teach at the house of Xue Xuan 薛瑄. When he was on the point of death he had only one old concubine left. As he lay dying a screen was put up between them, and they were out of each other's presence. His students waited on him.

In the middle of the night they [the man and his concubine] knocked their heads against the posts of the screen. The candle went out and was not relit. On the brink of death he lay with his head inclined toward the screen. He had things to say to her before he died but could not say them. He looked left and right for her, and died. How sad indeed.[125]

Mao Qiling's argument may be summarized as follows: first, the passage prohibiting people of the opposite sex from dying in each other's arms referred to the "body supporters," the group of people who physically held the body as it approached death. Second, faulty texts and commentaries had misconstrued the passage, by implying that it mandated the absolute separation of the sexes, instead of just regulating the sex of the body supporters; their rationale was the avoidance of indecencies being taken with the body. Third, it was outrageous to think that people would consider such indecencies anyway. Fourth, if you

125 *Sangli wushuo pian*, 4b–5a.

desire to keep husband and wife away from each other, how do you justify burying them in the same grave? Fifth, the services of members of the opposite sex are needed throughout the illness. How then can one justify drawing an arbitrary line, and expelling a spouse or child when the illness is deemed to be extreme? Sixth, such a plan would be against the dictates of reason, and natural human emotions. Seventh, when a man reached an advanced age, it was expected that his wife would care for him. They were expected to share a bedroom, and the wife was expected to accompany him when he went out. How then can it make sense to separate them at the point of death? Eighth, social conditions had changed. In former times households might be much larger, and it was possible that unrelated people might be in the room with the dying; in the presence of such people perhaps there would be a rationale for excluding members of the opposite sex. But with the smaller households of his time, there was no justification for fearing a sexual relationship with the dead or dying.[126]

In a letter that survives in Mao Qiling's collected writings, we see another example of his reasoning processes. The letter is interesting because it reveals the social background that gave rise to this new system of mourning. It was written in response to a letter from He Zhijie 何之杰 (1621–99) to Mao Qiling, asking him to resolve a question on the mourning rites.

The issue to be resolved concerned a Deputy Assistant Salt Commissioner named Zhu Ru 朱如 (see Figure 7). Zhu had a legal wife, whose name is not specified, and a concubine surnamed Wang 王. In Zhu's marriage with his legal wife they produced no children. But he and Wang did have children together, and after the death of his legal wife he elevated his concubine to legal wife, and he raised the status of their eldest son to primary son. On the death of Wang, the husband, his legal wife, and the eldest son were all deceased. The question for Mao Qiling was whether the eldest grandson (son of the eldest son) could be chief mourner at his grandmother's funeral, although she had been a concubine at the time of his birth, and although his status had never been elevated.

The letter opens with Mao Qiling's statement that he had asked some of the scholarly acquaintances who gathered at his home, all of whom had declined government service, for their opinion. But they all felt that there was no easy answer to the question. Thus, he himself proposed to answer the question as best he could.

To begin with, he said, in former times there was tremendous awareness of the variations within death rituals (as we have noted for the late Ming). It was well known and accepted that they differed according to place and time. Now, he said, people consult only Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals*. Instead they should use as

126 It is clear from the word *xie* 褻 that a sexual indecency is implied.

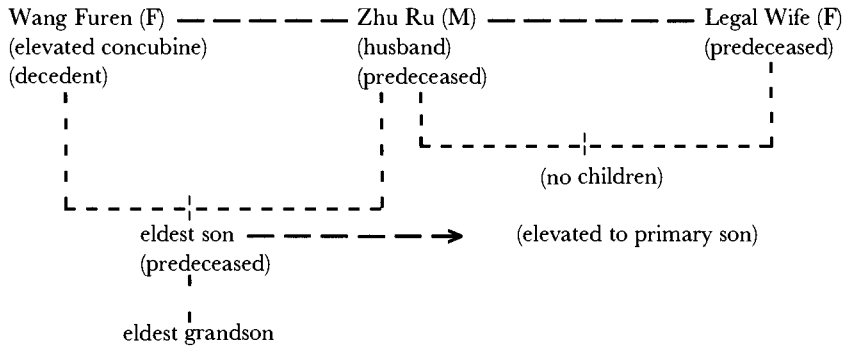

Figure 7. Family relations of Wang Furen. Based on Mao Qiling's letter to He Zhijie. He Zhijie had written to Mao asking his advice on whether the eldest grandson of Zhu Ru (the deputy assistant salt commissioner) could serve as chief mourner at his grandmother's funeral, even though she had been a concubine at the time of his birth.

many sources as possible to understand proper observances. They should look to common people's practices, and the laws enacted over time, as well as to the social context of the ritual.

The principle of mourning for a relative who was a legal wife, and not a concubine, was the maintenance of the relationship between husband and primary wife as definitive of the family unit. But, he argued, this was a later accretion to the original rites. Although it made sense in the days when people had many hereditary titles to pass on to their children, it no longer made sense in his days, when ranks were not commonly passed down. Moreover, dynastic law since the time of Zhu Xi had done away with many of the similar restrictions against mourning nonprimary relatives, and thus this would not be the first time *Family Rituals* would be modified.

Next, Mao Qiling examined specific relationships in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, to find an analogous situation. He determined that there was one exactly comparable, in which mourning was observed. He gave greatest precedence to the *Spring and Autumn Annals* because he believed other works, such as the *Rituals of Zhou*, the *Decorum Rituals*, and the *Record of Rites*, were forgeries produced during the Warring States period.[127]

127 He sets his beliefs out in *Sangli wushuo pian*. There was, he argues, a text that is now lost called *Rituals of Officers* (*Shili* 士禮). During the Warring States period, it was used in the forging of the three ritual classics. Thus although these books were generally forgeries, they might contain some information that was reliable. *Sangli wushuo pian*, 2a. The text of Mao Qiling's letter is "Fu He Yian [He Zhijie] lun bensheng zumu bu chengzhong shu 復何毅庵〔何之杰〕論本生祖母不丞重書" *Xi he ji* (Siku Quanshu Zhenben ed., 178/1), 15.1a–7a.

Another textual argument he made stemmed from his analysis of the etymology of *chengzhong* 承重, which literally means "to take up the responsibility." It was generally used to mean the obligation of taking up the responsibility of being chief mourner. He believed that *chengzhong* was mistakenly used for *chuanzhong* 傳重, which literally means "passing down the responsibility." This was used only by feudal lords, in ancient times, and did not apply to common people. Thus, he said, when people became concerned with these issues they were not only misusing a historical term, they were taking on airs of superiority.

From textual evidence he moved to common sense. It was compatible with reason and with sentiment that Madame Zhu Ru's grandson take up the position of chief mourner for her, he argued. Why should a quirk of the ritual texts keep her from being the object of formal mourning? Another aspect of this commonsense critique was that, as Mao pointed out, according to *Family Rituals* mourning for Madame Zhu Ru was not merely lowered to second degree but was eliminated entirely. It might have made sense if she were mourned at a lesser degree by her grandson, but to eliminate mourning for her entirely, when she was the sole survivor of her husband and his primary wife, was inhumane. Finally, he argued that it would be ridiculous to have a funeral for her with no chief mourner present. The role of chief mourner was central to the funeral observances, and thus if he were going to be eliminated, it would be as though there were no funeral at all.

A brief review of some of this study's findings will lead to a fuller appreciation of Mao Qiling's achievement. Before his time, changing of mourning rituals was considered the province of the sovereign, whether it was Empress Wu in the Tang dynasty or Hongwu in the Ming. Even when changes were made, as in the late Ming, they were not made systematically, and they were recorded in casual writings. But Mao Qiling completely reformed and renovated the system of mourning. To do this he used all methods: he looked upward at elite practices, downward at the practices of common people; he looked at various local practices, and at the various regulations enacted over time. In his demand that rituals conform to sentiment he was relying on perceptions of mourning from the late Ming, and thus was benefiting from that period of change, as well. He consulted his friends, and thereby relied on the network of scholarship that was forming in the lower Yangzi. Doubtless, too, he benefited from the state's disengagement from the system of mourning, and from his own disengagement from serving the state.

Yan Yuan 顏元 (1635–1704), a slightly younger contemporary of Mao Qiling, came up with ideas just as radical, and founded his own school of pragmatically oriented scholarship. Although he wrote much less prolifically on mourning rituals than Mao Qiling, what is highly significant about this man who would become known as one of the foremost scholars of the Qing period, was that his

realization of the new path of scholarship he would follow came to him during his mourning observances.

Wang Kunshen wrote of Yan: "He opened his mouth to utter the words that for two thousand years none was able to speak, and he put down on paper the thoughts that for two thousand years none dared to write."[128] What would become a remarkable career began rather mundanely, however. Yan began his philosophical career as a devout follower of the school of Song Neo-Confucianism. It was out of his devotion to the Song thinkers that he maintained his punctilious attention to the rites. He sought to ritualize every aspect of his behavior, and kept a diary in which he constantly graded himself on his performance.[129]

Yan's early experiences were deeply affected by the Qing conquest. In 1638, when he was three years old, his father was kidnapped and taken to Manchuria by invading forces. At the age of thirty-one Yan set out in search of his father and ended up in Peking, where he distributed leaflets bearing his father's description.[130] Perhaps it was from a feeling of rootlessness that he observed strenuously the ritual requirements in *Family Rituals*. When his grandmother died in 1668 he observed the mourning rituals so carefully that "his mind became greatly agitated and his health endangered."[131] Ironically, he was unaware that the woman he thought was his grandmother was actually his adoptive grandmother – his father had been adopted by a man surnamed Zhu, although his original name had been Yan. His experiences in mourning are recorded in his essay entitled "Humble Observations during a Period of Mourning."[132] It records the frustrations he encountered while trying to follow precisely the rules for mourning set out in *Family Rituals*. Because it captures the moment of his "conversion" away from Song scholarship, it is examined in some detail here.

It is significant that Yan Yuan began his "Humble Observations" not with a discussion of the fasting regimen that almost killed him, but with something as seemingly minor as the proper headgear to wear in mourning. For someone as committed to Song scholarship as he, there was no detail too minor. And the crisis he faced was not one of hardship – he was willing to endure any level of suffering for the sake of proper mourning – but of internal consistency. If observed scrupulously, *Family Rituals*' requirements would actually result in a

128 Quoted in translation, in Tu Wei-ming, "Yen Yuan [Yan Yuan]: From Inner Experience to Lived Concreteness," in Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *The Unfolding of Neo-Confucianism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 514. Cited with approval by Qian Mu 錢穆, in *Zhongguo jinsanbainian xueshu shi* 中國近三百年學術史 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1937), 179.

129 Li Gong 李塨, *Yanxizhai Xiansheng nianpu* 顏習齋先生年譜, Yanli Congshu ed., 上.8a.

130 *Eminent Chinese*, 913.

131 *Eminent Chinese*, 913–14.

132 *Ju you yu jian* 居憂愚見, in *Xizhai jiyu*, 卷10 (Jifu Congshu ed.), 9b.

flagrant violation of ritual. For example, Yan noted that *Family Rituals* required that those in mourning wear bonnets of paper.[133]

"Those in the first and second degrees of mourning use paper and paste to make their bonnets." In the beginning I observed this meticulously, and in accordance fashioned myself a bonnet of paper. At the time of the interment, I met with heavy rain and snow, and the bonnet was ruined. I began to muse over the use of hempen bonnets for the length of the mourning period. The time involved was in no way short; even if I did not meet rain, how could I get by with paper? It would be easier to use cloth and heavy paste as materials. The outside would still be wrapped in paper, but it would be added over cloth.[134]

The price of a torn bonnet was far from purely aesthetic. It meant exposure of the hair, which should be concealed during sacrifices. Thus, Yan Yuan wrote, "those who adhere to the letter [of the *li*] do not use [cloth], and end up exposing their hair. This is certainly not the original intent of the [rules governing] clothing."[135]

Yan Yuan was careful to note that the problem with the text was a mistake in transmission of the Confucian *li*. "The Ancients," he wrote, "must have had their system," but it had gotten confused along the way. Yan believed that the only appropriate response to the problem was to see what the ancients had intended, and to change the ritual so as to conform to their original intent. He revised the *li* to conform to a simpler vision of mourning practice: "I would live at ease in a simple hut. When off on errands in the fields or gardens I would wear a white cap of raw cotton. I would cry and offer sacrifices until the time of the encoffining. When receiving condolence visitors I would add a second-degree bonnet. Perhaps this is what the common man in mourning should wear."[136]

Yan Yuan's innovation was his ability and willingness to look behind the rituals at their original intent. He was baffled that commentators before him had not done this. He sought, for example, the origin of the practice of using soft cotton coverings on the eyes and ears of the mourning headgear.

In front of the headgear there is soft cloth covering the eyes. On the sides there is soft cotton covering the ears. This is what all the world uses. I have searched all the commentaries, and the Confucian *Family Rituals* and none mention it. Only a commentary to *Deng's Family Rituals* (*Dengshi jiali* 鄧氏家禮) has a passage: "Cover the ears with cloth, and flossy balls of cotton." Of the old classics and texts that treat of family rituals,

133 By Yan Yuan's time these were worn only while performing mourning rituals. It was out of his orthodox reading of *Family Rituals* that he chose to wear his mourning bonnet all the time.

134 *Ju you yu jian*, 10.3a.

135 *Ju you yu jian*, 3b.

136 *Ju you yu jian*, 3b. The bonnet would be worn over the cap; it would be made of paper, but the mourner would not have to worry about its disintegration, because he or she would wear it only when performing rituals or when receiving guests.

none are enlightening on this point; none even know when the practice began. Because of this, some people feel that the covering of the ears is some kind of error.[137]

But to Yan the rationale for this practice was obvious: "When the son of man is in mourning, by covering the eyes he shows he cannot endure observing the countenance. And by covering the ears he shows that he does not take joy in hearing sounds."[138] By finding the rationale behind the ritual observance, Yan is able, in a sense, to purify the ritual – to give it an elegant simplicity that goes beyond petty attention to form.

Another example Yan employed concerned the fabric of which gowns were to be made. "First- and second-degree mourners" he wrote, "used hemp" to fashion their gowns, "and for their belt used bean-fiber linen."[139] As Yan opined, hemp and bean-fiber linen were chosen because they were cheap, coarse fabrics; though at the time he was writing (because of the rise of cotton fabric in the Yuan) they were expensive fabrics.

> Perhaps it was because the raw cloth of the ancients was different from our own. Hemp and bean-fiber linen were probably things that a family could easily obtain. Now though they are poor people's luxury clothing. A poor family can rarely obtain them. Those intent on the *li* are forced to run about in the market place, struggling to observe the ancients' precepts. This only shows how they "glue the stops and try to play the instrument." How tough this must be on poor scholars![140]

Yan Yuan chose to follow instead what he perceived to be the ancients' intent. Throughout the period of mourning he would use the coarsest cotton cloth available. For his belt he still used bean-fiber linen, though he conceded that the poor might be unable to buy so many feet of the material. They could use raw cotton for their belts, for though in so doing "they depart from the *li* texts, they get *li*'s meaning."

Like Mao Qiling, Yan Yuan drew his recommendations for change from observations of the world around him. In a bitter passage in "Humble Observations" he contrasted the condolence call as it was envisioned in the ritual texts, with the unhappy reality he saw among the elites in his community. In the condolence visit correctly performed, the chief mourner when he went to greet guests would have his feet bare, his skirt tucked under his belt, and his hands across his chest, covering his heart. He would emerge from the western steps of the hall, as if to suggest his father were still alive.[141] The guests as they

137 *Ju you yu jian*, 3a.
138 *Ju you yu jian*, 3b.
139 *Ge* 葛, scientific name *Pueraria thungergiana*, a creeping, edible bean whose fibers can be made into linen-like cloth, and whose roots are used in herbal medicine.
140 *Ju you yu jian*, 3b.
141 The eastern steps were reserved for greetings by the master of the house. By emerging from the western steps the filial son demonstrated that his father, though dead, was being served as if he were still the living master of the house.

arrived would be wearing plain white cotton over their court robes, and those who arrived after the first dressing of the corpse would have their furs concealed. They would be wearing plain white caps. If a guest were a close friend, he would add a belt. Then the principal mourner and the close friend would stomp their feet together. As Yan Yuan lamented, friendship of old "held profundity and depth in esteem."[142]

Condolence calls of Yan Yuan's own day paled by comparison. Guests arrived wearing their court robes, not even bothering to remove the ornamentation. Red was the color of joy, and was not appropriate to wear to a funeral. The outward signs of grief were absent, too. Sincere weeping and stomping the feet had become outdated. Acquaintances, close friends, and relatives in general quickly paid their respects at the bier, before continuing conversation with the other guests.

Yan Yuan's description of officials coming to pay condolence calls in their official robes, with rank and insignia still in place, betrayed his critique of a generation of elites who had put official careers before family obligations. These people came flaunting their official successes, forgetting the plight of their parents' generation, who had suffered so intensely during the Manchu conquest.

Yan Yuan's own fastidious attention to the details of the rituals was meant to create the proper sequence of emotions in himself and the other mourners, so that they would feel the proper sentiments at the proper times. But because the rituals had been changed in transmission, and because social conditions had changed, rituals no longer functioned to regulate the emotions, as they were supposed to have done in Song times. Yan Yuan described a point in the rituals for his deceased grandfather, at which his grandmother was supposed to have stopped crying, but being unable to restrain her tears she ran from the house.

> "Women welcome and send off guests in the lower hall, and they do not cry. Men who leave the dwelling and see others also do not cry." I was afraid that at the time of the first dressing [of the body] emotions associated with mourning would be difficult to control. How could the cries emanating from the lower hall [where the women were] ever be suppressed? My benevolent deceased grandmother, at the greater dressing of my grandfather's corpse, ran out the back lane, back and forth, crying without cease. By the time of the interment she had left the road of the honorable Zhou [and had forsaken the rituals].[143]

Thus, Yan Yuan witnessed firsthand the problems faced by those who took the rituals very seriously, and very literally. He himself was on the verge of starvation because, although he was permitted a handful of grain in the morning and

142 *Ju you yu jian*, 7b. The description is from 7a–8a.
143 *Ju you yu jian*, 9a.

one at night, he would have to stop eating when condolence visitors arrived, and leftovers could not be eaten. "When I felt the awful effects of this practice," he said, "I edited the books and corrected the *li*."[144]

Yan Yuan's contribution lay first in what he destroyed, and second in what he built. His was a unique kind of iconoclasm. If the *li* texts possessed any supreme authority, that authority came from their rationality. Thus Yan Yuan in his careful examination of the *li* texts was not being fastidious; he was carrying on a kind of iconoclasm, destroying the necessity for thought-blind literalness.

What is even more remarkable is what Yan Yuan left in the wake of his destruction. Instead of abandoning ritual, he infused it with new meaning. His observations, far from humble, might have helped build the foundation of a new system of belief. That system would have implications stretching far into society and culture.

144 *Ju you yu jian*, 10b.

4

The bureaucratization of the Confucian *li*

As the preceding chapter noted, the Qing state during the time of Kangxi discontinued many aspects of the mourning system it had inherited from the Ming. Owing chiefly to the influence of the Kangxi Emperor, top officials were routinely prevented from returning to mourn their parents. This strategy was implemented, as Chapter 3 suggests, not by an open choice of policies that ran counter to the Confucian *li* as represented in ritual classics, but by a redefinition of that *li*. Instead of advising his ministers to be unfilial, Kangxi sought to change the answer to the question: What does filial behavior consist of? And he helped assure a favorable answer to the question by selecting officials (such as Li Guangdi) who would be more loyal to him than filial to their parents. By so doing, Kangxi was further breaking down what we have been calling the parallel conception of society.

The preceding chapter discussed Kangxi's innovations in the mourning of his top level of officials. This chapter takes up the issue of bureaucratization: the ways in which Qing emperors including Kangxi set policies for mourning, embodying their new outlook on rituals in a series of rules and regulations. Here we see the role of emperors and their officials in shaping policy, and witness the efforts by Yongzheng 雍正 (r. 1723–35) to institutionalize and routinize further the changes made by his father, Kangxi. What the father had done largely on a case-by-case basis, the son sought to make more fully a part of routine bureaucratic procedure. Doing so was especially difficult because Yongzheng presided over a more peaceful empire, and peaceful times should have meant that mourning leaves were more readily granted.

Yongzheng's changes, like his father's, were made not openly but by redefinition: thus the rhetoric of mourning remained largely traditional. And yet Yongzheng went farther than Kangxi by beginning to make changes to the rhetoric itself. Using the values of hierarchy and frugality, he was able to change the ideology of the parallel conception of society. Ultimately he would go as far as declaring that his officials should be loyal to him above all others.

This chapter also follows the line of change into the reign of Yongzheng's

son Qianlong 乾隆 (r. 1736–95). Once again, change would never be presented as such. Language was carefully crafted to conceal innovation, and old terms associated with mourning ceased to have the same meanings. During this time there was also a rising sensitivity to the physicality of death. Yet when Qing intellectuals sought to regularize insulation from death they did so with appeals not for new rules, but for tradition. Qianlong, in general, sought to preside over a revivification of orthodox Confucian ideas of mourning. Whether or not he succeeded, and the extent to which his efforts were mere gestures, are the subjects of the latter part of this chapter.

Examining changes in the mourning system through the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong reigns in particular reveals the changing nature of emperorship in the early to mid Qing. During the reigns of Kangxi and Yongzheng, the presence of the emperor (as opposed to that of his senior ministers) is clearly felt in the changes to the mourning system, and the changes made fit into a coherent pattern. The same cannot be said of the Qianlong period.

Qing mourning before Kangxi

Although Kangxi was the first Qing ruler to formulate consistent policy on mourning, emperors who preceded him did put new rules in place. The first such rules were formulated in the decades following the Qing conquest. Between 1644 and 1650, control of the empire was consolidated in the hands of Dorgon 多爾袞 (1612–50), who served as regent to the Shunzhi 順治 Emperor (r. 1644–61).[1] Under Dorgon's aegis the rudiments of a mourning system, inspired by the Ming model, were put in place. When Shunzhi came to power some of these rules were modified and the Qing mourning system began to gain some distinctiveness. After the death of Shunzhi imperial power became consolidated in the hands of Oboi 鼇拜 (d. 1669), who was regent to the infant Kangxi Emperor. Oboi, too, implemented changes to the mourning system.

The rules for mourning developed in the Dorgon period were modeled on those of the Ming. In 1646 a Ming-style system of mourning was incorporated, obliging officials to return to mourn their parents for a twenty-seven-month period.[2] In the same year, strict rules were put in place for those who avoided mourning or who trumped up a false mourning. Those officials who concealed the death of a parent to avoid mourning were punished with one hundred blows of the heavy bamboo. Those who trumped up mourning likewise re-

1 Pacification of the empire was not quickly achieved, and mourning regulations recognized that fact. In 1664 it was noted that some officials could not (*bu neng*) return to their home areas to complete mourning; they were to lodge elsewhere for the mourning period, presumably burying their parents temporarily in that place until their bodies could be moved to permanent grave sites. *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi) 大清會典 (康熙), 1690 162卷: 16.7a.

2 *Qing shi gao*, 2725.

ceived one hundred blows, except if they did so to escape punishment for another wrongdoing, in which case their guilt was judged an "aggravated offense."[3]

Ming-based rules were of limited utility to the new Qing leadership, and it was not long before new mourning rules were implemented. As a conquest dynasty, the Manchu leadership was more concerned than their Ming predecessors with maintaining their hold on the state. They saw the somewhat foreign institution of mourning, which allowed officials to leave their official posts with little warning, as subject to abuse by those who sought to flee their responsibilities to the Qing. They thus stiffened penalties for those who shirked their official responsibilities by remaining on their mourning leaves for too long.

Under the Ming, punishments for returning late to one's post were not instituted until 1558. Even then, there was no penalty for returning to the post as late as one year after the conclusion of mourning. Officials who returned from one to two years after the conclusion of mourning were investigated to ascertain whether they were escaping wrongdoing. Those who were absent for more than three years lost their official posts.[4]

Penalties instituted in 1654 were substantially more stringent than those under the Ming. Officials who were away from their posts for a half year or more were impeached; for a year or more, automatically retired; and for two years or more, cashiered.[5] In 1664, under the Oboi regency, the rules for returning late to the post were made even more stringent. Those who returned late by one month or more were fined one year's salary. Those who were late by two months or more were transferred to a new post that was lower by one grade in rank. Those who were late for more than three months were cashiered.[6]

Oboi-period rules also considerably tightened verification procedures for officials who went out on mourning leave. Ming procedures had employed a system of tallies and passes to verify that the official had permission to return. In the Ming there was also a system in which the Board of Personnel memorialized on behalf of the bereaved, requesting that he be given permission to return.[7] If an official claimed illness, he could return to duty as late as he

3 Xue Yunsheng 薛允升, *Duli cunyi* 讀例存肆 (Taibei: Chinese Materials Center, 1970), 19.441.

4 *Da Ming huidian*, 11.2a. An added incentive for Ming officials to return to duty was the policy, established during the Chenghua reign (1465–88), of stopping official salaries of officials who did not return after twenty-seven months. *Huang Ming tiaofa shi lei zuan*, 上.202.

5 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.7b.

6 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.7b. In 1670 these deadlines were relaxed. Officials were given a one-year grace period to account for travel time. Those late for more than one year were fined one year's salary; for more than two years, they were automatically retired. Ibid., 7b–8a.

7 The *Ming huidian* gives a clear exposition of how the system of tallies was supposed to work. "Capital and Provincial Officials who arrange mourning in conformance with regulations . . . must have memorials submitted on their behalf by capital officials from their

wished, provided a local official issued him a stamped certificate attesting to his illness.

Under Oboi, new rules required the provincial governor or the provincial administration commissioner to make inquiries into the circumstances of the official's illness, as well as obtain a statement under seal from a local official in the area in which the official on mourning leave was domiciled. The governor or provincial administration commissioner was to forward that document, along with the report of his investigation, to the Board of Personnel. Two years later, a new rule was implemented for officials who became ill on the journey back to their posts. The circumstances of the illness were to be investigated by a local official from the area in which the illness began, who submitted a report under seal to the Board of Personnel.[8]

Other rules implemented in 1663 and 1664 further tightened verification procedures for those in mourning, placing more responsibility on provincial officials to verify that the death of a parent had indeed occurred. Under the Ming, when provincial governors and other top officials heard of a parent's death, they submitted a memorial to Peking. Under Oboi-period modifications to that rule, governors and governors-general had first to ask each other to submit memorials on their behalfs attesting to the fact that a death had occurred. In provinces that were not under the jurisdiction of a governor-general (Henan, Shanxi, and Shandong), the provincial military commander would submit the memorial.[9] Local officials were given the task of submitting memorials to the Board of Personnel attesting to the fact that officials in their areas had duly left their home areas and were returning to their posts. These memorials had to be submitted within strict deadlines.[10]

A series of Oboi-period rules were designed to ensure that no official would be permitted to mourn if there were outstanding allegations involving the theft

own boards. They would in turn be given prefectural 'filial numbered tallies 孝字號勘合'. A person in charge of personnel gives a certificate marked 'capital region 應天府' and sends it as a pass to return. Once in the provinces [at the home area] the officials proffer their certificates, and are given one in return, which they bring back to their posts with them."

A slightly different system was put in place for Senior Officials. "Senior Officials' (*tangshang guan* 堂上官) arrangement of mourning. The Board of Personnel memorializes, and provides them with a tally. . . . When Senior Officials stationed in the southern capital arrange mourning, they bring their memorial in person to the capital, and are given the tally." *Da Ming huidian*, 11.2a.

8 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.7b.

9 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.4a. The provincial military commanders were very high-ranking military officials. One was generally appointed to each province, and had command of that province's Green Standards.

10 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.7a–b. The deadlines were as follows: capital officials, one month; those in Zhili (including Fengtian), four months; those in Shandong, Henan, and Shanxi, six months; those in Guangxi, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hunan, Jiangnan, eight months; Fujian, Liang-Guang, Sichuan, Guizhou, ten months; Yunnan, one year. For a typical memorial showing how these proofs worked in practice, see Memorial of Tian Wenjing 田文鏡, February 2, 1725 (2史科史書170).

of tax revenues in his jurisdiction. Between 1662 and 1668 a variety of arrangements were tried to allay the government's fears that corrupt officials would use mourning leaves to escape their wrongdoing. The new rules also were designed to ensure that the flow of revenue was uninterrupted by mourning. In 1662, the first year of the Oboi regency, provincial administration commissioners were charged with overseeing the collection of tax revenues while governors and governors-general were in mourning. In 1664 an edict was promulgated requiring provincial officials in whose jurisdictions there were pending allegations of theft of tax revenues to remain at their posts and delay mourning leave until the cases were resolved. A further provision was added in 1666 requiring governors and governors-general who prepared to go on mourning leave to clearly report outstanding allegations of theft of tax revenues within their jurisdictions. In 1668, provincial officials were fined one year's salary for each unsolved case of tax-revenue theft that went unsolved in their jurisdictions.[11]

Increasingly stringent regulations ran counter to the assumptions underlying the parallel conception of society. As noted in Chapter 1, that model envisioned a shocked and grief-stricken official "dropping everything" and hurrying home (*bensang*) to the side of his parent's coffin. That model had experienced some change in the early Ming, and by 1532 when officials were out on assignment they were required to submit routine memorials attesting to the successful completion of their missions before returning to mourn.[12]

The regulations promulgated during the Oboi period further undercut that model. The rules regulating circumstances in which there were allegations of theft of tax revenue, for example, might operate to keep an official from going out on mourning leave – even when the allegations were leveled not at him but at one of his subordinates. The requirement that governors and governors-general request verifying memorials from each other before leaving their posts also caused delays, as did another rule. It required all newly chosen officials who learned of a parent's death to await certification from the provinces before leaving to mourn.[13] It could take months for such a memorial to arrive, and until it did the official could not begin mourning. The next sections examine the ways in which changes to bureaucratic practice during subsequent reigns of the Qing dynasty further undercut the model of the parallel conception of society.

The subtle departure from the parallel conception of society evidenced a tension between competing ruling ideologies. As a conquest dynasty, the Qing

11 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.4a–4b. Provincial administration commissioners were charged with overseeing routine matters of provincial administration.

12 *Da Ming huidian*, 11.2a.

13 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.5b.

brought with them particular ideas about the need for Han submission, a desire deeply embedded in the requirements that Chinese shave their heads and adopt the Manchu hairstyle.[14] As part of that mind-set, these new rulers looked with suspicion on mourning rules that permitted officials to leave their posts, and that recognized parents as a legitimate locus of authority. And yet, confirming the old cliché that China "sinifies" its conquerors, pre-Kangxi rulers adopted some Han mourning rules.

In many ways, the Manchu regime increasingly embraced the Han notion of mourning, and the parallel conception of society that underlay it. This was evident in changing rules for mourning by banner personnel who were officials. Under Dorgon, banner personnel, whether Manchu, Mongol, or Han, were given only short periods of leave to bury their deceased parents. In 1653, under Shunzhi, that period was extended to one month for officials in civil posts, and in a nod to the parallel conception of society, bannermen were admonished to observe the three-year period of mourning while in their private residences. In 1664, the period was extended again, this time to three months. Officials from the Manchu homeland (*shengjing dengchu* 盛京等處) were to "follow their own convenience (*ting qi zibian* 聽其自便)" in determining whether to return to their homes for the burial, and mourned at their posts for three months. In 1666 Han bannermen were first differentiated from Manchus and Mongols, and were given six month's mourning leave in instances in which their parents had died at their posts.[15]

These changing rules show not only the piecemeal adaptation to Han notions of rule, but also increased sensitivity to the fact that Manchus occupied the positions of Han officials. Officials serving in the Manchu homelands were not required to mourn, but those who served in official posts within the empire proper had to take up mourning. Even if they did so for a shorter period, it was still required that they mourn in their residences for twenty-seven months. Special rules for Han bannermen, moreover, legitimized Han mourning customs in instances in which their parents had died in the performance of their official duties.

The trend in pre-Kangxi rules about which officials were permitted to mourn is less clear. While Shunzhi was in power mourning leaves were granted even to an official who was mourning great-grandparents, provided he was the eldest great-grandson, and the eldest son and grandson had predeceased him.[16] The Oboi period witnessed a contraction, however, in the relatives who could be mourned. In 1664 it was determined that capital and provincial officials who

14 See generally Chapter 5, and Chen Shengxi 陳生璽, "Qingchu tifaling de shishi yu Hanzu dizhujieji de paixi douzheng 清初剃髮令的實施與漢族地主階級的派系鬥爭," *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 4 (1985): 67–77.

15 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.1a–2a.

16 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.3a.

were adopted could mourn only their adoptive parents for the full twenty-seven-month period. For their natural parents they could receive a maximum leave of up to one year to superintend the burial (*zhisang*), if they so desired, and could get a recommendation from a superior official.[17] Given the circumstances of adoption in China – a not infrequent practice designed to provide a childless couple with an heir – this change was significant.[18] The rules were tightened further in 1666, when it was determined that those who memorialized requesting mourning were obliged to state whether mourning was for a mainline parent, and whether that parent was responsible for their upbringing.[19]

The beginnings of bureaucratization in the Kangxi reign

Although important precedents were set in the first decades of the Qing, it was not until Kangxi came to the throne, after the regency of Dorgon, that mourning policy began to take a decisive direction. The section on mourning leaves in the Kangxi edition of the *Collected Qing Institutions*, published in 1690, announced the direction the regime was taking in its important first sentence: "Our state rules all-under-heaven with filial piety."[20] This benchmark phrase for the parallel conception of society signified the regime's acceptance of that doctrine, and the obligations attendant therewith.

Soon after he came to power, Kangxi's edicts enunciated policies that demonstrated a willingness to conform to the parallel conception of society. In 1670 punishments were made more severe for officials who sought to evade mourning. Not only would they be cashiered, but they would be cashiered without possibility of pardon or return to service.[21] Another rule in the same year obliged local officials to inquire into the cases of officials who were supposed to be on mourning leave in their areas, or who were supposed to be returning from mourning leave but had not done so. If the local official failed to do so properly, he was fined one year's salary.[22]

Edicts promulgated in 1673 showed the regime's further commitment to the parallel conception of society. Officials were given leaves to mourn adoptive parents to the same extent they mourned their natural parents.[23] And those officials subordinate to and including those serving in the Provincial Adminis-

17 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.6b.
18 Ann Waltner, *Getting an Heir: Adoption and the Construction of Kinship in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990).
19 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.3a.
20 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.1a.
21 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.6a.
22 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.7a.
23 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.6b–7a. Note, however, that this does not appear to change prior rules, which had only limited mourning for natural parents in cases of adoption.

tration Commission and the Provincial Surveillance Commission were reminded that they had to observe mourning, as well.[24]

The Kangxi regime also demonstrated its embrace of the parallel conception of society through rules that made mourning by officials who were bannermen closer to that practiced by Han officials. Manchu, Mongol, and Han banner personnel, when stationed outside the capital, followed the same rules as Han officials in observing mourning. Instead of mourning for three months, they observed a full twenty-seven months of mourning.[25] Procedures implemented for their returning to duty (*qifu*) closely followed those of Han officials.[26]

The exclusion of bannermen stationed at the capital suggests two important reasons for the mourning policy, and confirms generalizations made about Kangxi in the preceding chapter. First, the policy emphasized upholding the *appearance* of adhering to the parallel conception of society, rather than to the reality of that doctrine. Manchu officials stationed at the capital were less conspicuous than those in the provinces, who had contact with members of the populace, and whose whereabouts were usually well known by them.

Second, the exclusion of bannermen stationed in the capital from the twenty-seven months of mourning fit with Kangxi's greater concern to maintain at their posts the officials he personally relied upon. Like Zhu Shi and Zhang Boxing, who were discussed in the preceding chapter, capital bannermen were much more within the emperor's orbit, and thus he was less willing to grant them full mourning periods.[27] This emphasis was made even clearer in an edict of 1681, which stated that any official seeking leave to return to his home, whether for mourning, illness, or vacation (*ji jia* 給假), had to state clearly whether his home was in Zhili (that is, in the province in which Peking was situated). These would be more likely to receive leave if they could be easily recalled to their posts.[28]

These twin emphases – on appearances, and on the importance of imperial power – were manifest in the other Kangxi pronouncements on mourning policy. Thus, despite the avowed commitment to the parallel conception, Kangxi had no patience for officials who, overcome with grief, left their posts

24 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.4b. Members of these commissions were responsible for overseeing the subprovincial administration of routine government policy, and of judicial matters.

25 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.2b.

26 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.7a. Manchu bannermen received an added bonus, however: they received special stipends when a parent died, to defray funeral costs. See Memorial of Lioboo 留保 and Akdun 阿克敦 (2禮儀硃批2).

27 Emendations to this rule made later in the year confirm this view of Kangxi-period changes. Civil banner personnel stationed at tombs in the Manchu homeland, as well as those in the banner garrison areas, as well as Banner Clerks (*bithesi* 筆帖式) attached to provincial offices similarly were not given full mourning leaves. These were all officials who would have little contact with Han Chinese. *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.2b.

28 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.6b.

on hearing of the death of a parent. In 1670 it was ruled that such people were fined one year's salary.[29] In 1675 the penalty was made even harsher. These officials were reduced two grades in rank and transferred to another post.[30]

Imperial power was made manifest through increased numbers of instances in which mourning was observed at the post – in each case the emperor's permission was required. A 1670 edict ruled that when a governor or governor-general wanted a subordinate official to mourn at his post (*liu ren shouzhi*), that governor or governor-general should memorialize the emperor, who would grant or deny permission. In 1672, it was decided that governors or governors-general who arranged mourning had to await a decision by the emperor before leaving their posts. Finally, in 1677, an edict ordered that governors and governors-general should memorialize requesting that talented officials (*caineng guanyuan* 才能官員) serving in areas where the military was being used be retained in office, and observe mourning at their posts (*zairen shouzhi*).[31]

As some of the above suggests, Kangxi-period rules subtly changed much about the mourning system, while leaving its rhetoric largely orthodox. They show that the policy of mourning at one's post, Kangxi's innovation to deal with the reality that he did not wish his top officials to leave his side, was making its way into bureaucratic practice. And a further innovation, that mourning at the post could be requested by governors and governors-general, made the innovation more a part of bureaucratic practice. As the next section shows, in the Yongzheng period the rhetoric itself began to change.

Yongzheng on frugality and hierarchy

Yongzheng's change to the ideology of mourning is evident in the deleted first sentence of the edition of the *Collected Qing Institutions* published during his reign. Although most of the first paragraph was retained unchanged from the Kangxi edition, the first sentence, "Our state rules all-under-heaven with filial piety," was removed.[32] As already noted, this statement was the benchmark of the

29 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.5a–5b.

30 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.3b. After 1677, local civil officials stationed in an area in which there was a military emergency (*jinyao* 緊要), and who had been required to mourn at their posts (*zairen shouzhi*) were to be impeached if they were unable, presumably because of grief, to function. *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.4b–5a.

31 *Da Qing huidian* (Kangxi), 16.4b–5a. Mourning by military officials varied according to their rank. "When provincial military commanders and regional commanders suffer the death of a parent, then their governor or governor-general reports it in routine memorial. In the case of a regional vice commander then a senior official in their own unit reports it. They are all ordered to leave their posts and return to their homes to observe mourning. On the day mourning is completed, they obtain a letter of proof (*zhengming shu* 證明書) from the governor or governor-general of the native place, and proceed to the Board of War to obtain new assignments. Those from the rank of assistant regional commander on down all observe mourning at their posts." *Qingguo xing zhengfa fanlun* 清國行政法汎論 (Tokyo, 1910), 737–38.

32 *Da Qing huidian* (Yongzheng) 大清會典 (雍正), 1733 250卷, 1a.

parallel conception of society; that it was no longer in the section on mourning leaves reflected an important change.

Yongzheng used an emphasis on frugality to begin his undermining of the parallel conception of society. This emphasis on frugality had precedents. Qing emperors from the beginning of their dynasty had decried the wastefulness they perceived in Han rituals. Hong Taiji, it will be remembered, had criticized the burying of valuable items with the deceased. And Kangxi had criticized the practice of having costly banquets and entertainment at funerals, especially in the families of Han bannermen.

Yongzheng at the very start of his reign added his voice to those of his predecessors, criticizing wasteful funeral practices.[33] As was the case with Kangxi, his efforts were directed principally against the wasteful excesses of military officials. On December 25, 1724, he prohibited them from attending the banquets, plays, and gambling parties that were arranged for friends and neighbors at funerals. As the *Veritable Records* note, Yongzheng "strictly prohibited military men (*bingmin* 兵民) from participating in entertainment as part of funeral observances. He also prohibited these men from gathering with friends a day before the funeral to attend feasts."[34]

While Yongzheng ordered that as a general rule mourning and funerals "must follow simplicity and frugality, and must avoid extravagances (*jianwang* 僭妄)," his approach in dealing with the problem was to divide his top officials into Manchu and Han, civil and military. He held Manchu and military officials to higher standards of simplicity.[35]

In the logic of his edict we see both a new kind of reasoning, and a new line of argument.

An edict to the nine chief ministers.[36] Since the time when my deceased father [the Kangxi emperor] ascended to the distant regions,[37] my heart has been deeply grieved. From the standpoint that ritual observances should follow previous examples old writings were consulted, and an elaborate funeral was decided upon. I have not dared to have all under heaven be disloyal to their parents. And yet what is done at the top of society, the lower orders invariably imitate 上之所行下必校之.

33 In an edict reiterating Hong Taiji's, he said that burying gold and silver objects for the use of the dead could be of no possible use to the deceased. Feng Erkang 馮爾康, *Yongzheng zhuan* 雍正傳 (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1985), 368. See *Da Qing huidian shili* 大清會典事例 1886 1220卷 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1991), 卷768.

34 *Shizong Xian Huangdi shilu* 世宗憲皇帝實錄, [cited as *Shizong shilu*] *Qing shilu* 清實錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1986), 26.8b.

35 Feng Erkang, 367–68. Quotation from the same source, citing *Shangyu neige* 上諭內閣, Kangxi 61.12.12 [January 18, 1723].

36 The "Nine Chief Ministers 九卿" was a general reference to high officials of the central government.

37 It is interesting that the form of the edict does not employ an imperial term for the death of Kangxi, but uses only "my deceased father ascended to the distant region 皇考升遐," an honorific phrase, but not one reserved for emperors.

Hitherto, officials of the eight banners have been overly extravagant. Now when they see us preparing rituals that are elaborate, I am afraid that these practices will become part of established custom, and people will strive even more after wastefulness. In the case of military people this might result in their bankrupting their families, or in squandering their inheritances. Certainly this would be no way for me to teach the *li* to all under heaven. . . . Therefore let my top officials be divided into military and civil, Manchu and Han, according to their ranks, and let the funerals of military people be plain and simple, and without extravagances. And let marriage and other kinds of rituals be the same. Let it so be ordered.[38]

At issue in this edict is the assumption that when people in society arranged mourning for their parents, they took the imperial funeral as model. When the edict says "what is done at the top of society, the lower orders invariably imitate," it embodies both normative principle and psychological truth. Naturally officials follow the same principles as their emperor in designing their ritual observances, and this was as it should be. Undeniably this belief was a formulation of the parallel conception of society: commoners' observances for their parents were conceived of as paralleling ministers' observances for their own parents. Both paralleled the emperor's observances for his father, the deceased emperor.

Yongzheng's dilemma as set out in the edict is that having arranged an elaborate funeral in accordance with ritual precedents, while knowing full well that people throughout society should, and also tended to, follow the lead of the emperor in designing their own funeral observances, he did not think it right for them to arrange elaborate funerals for their parents. For the first time in such a direct way, the military ethos of the Qing regime conflicted with the parallel conception of society. Elaborate funerals were appropriate for emperors, and perhaps for Han officials at civil posts; but they were inappropriate for military officials and for Manchus.

Yongzheng's answer to the dilemma was a division of people into categories by origin and rank, imposing a level of elaborateness for each category. This categorization, which was in effect the imposition of sumptuary privileges according to rank, was the paramount feature of Yongzheng's outlook on ritual. Such sumptuary restrictions were not new in China, but Yongzheng placed tremendous emphasis on them, assigning very specific sets of privileges to each rank.

The majority of Yongzheng's sumptuary restrictions were put in place in the third year of his reign. In general, they restricted accouterments of the funeral rites that could be the objects of conspicuous consumption. During the dressing of the corpse, for example, the deceased was dressed in numerous sets

38 *Shizong shilu*, 2.21a–21b. The material omitted from the translation consists of quotations from the Confucian *Analects*.

of clothes that were either purchased by the family in mourning or were gifts of those who came to pay condolence calls. Yongzheng limited his military men to five sets of these clothes.[39] He also regulated the sumptuousness of the coffin by rank. In general, military men were required to have coffin covers made of cotton, but if they had succeeded in even the lowest levels of the examination system, they were permitted to use a cover of silk.[40]

Funerals were only one area in which Yongzheng created sumptuary gradations. He regulated marriages, too, in much the same way, and also the dress code of the officialdom. In this latter effort his goal was both to simplify and to differentiate by rank.[41] Careful regulation of official clothing was an early Yongzheng innovation, beginning within the very first few months of his reign.[42] In the fifth year of his reign, on October 27, 1727, he complained that although officials' court clothing was differentiated, there was no way to differentiate their everyday clothing (*pingshi suo yong fu* 平時所用服), and he suggested differentiating everyday dress according to rank.[43] Then again in the ninth year of his reign an edict was sent to the Board of Rites requesting further differentiation of official bonnets, both for court wear and for everyday use.[44]

For Yongzheng, sumptuary regulations according to rank were at the heart of frugality. Allocating a different grade of resources to each rank in society would ensure that resources were used properly.

> As to Our State's desire to pacify the masses, none is prior to the making of substantial customs (*hou fengsu* 厚風俗). As to substantial customs, none is more important than frugality. In the *Rituals of Zhou* higher and lower orders in society each have their own proper ranks, the use of resources had its level, and in this way they guarded against going to excesses (*jian* 僭). Extravagances were prohibited.[45]

Guarding against the "going to excesses" seems to be the most decisive explanation for Yongzheng's insistence on hierarchy. By carefully regulating the accouterments of rank he sought to control the power and prestige of the hierarchy over which he presided. By carefully regulating his officials' clothing, their position on that hierarchy would always be apparent: to themselves, to each other, to the common people, and to the emperor. Ideally, their ranks would become inextricably linked to their identities.[46]

In the Yongzheng period formulation, the hierarchy went beyond the offi-

39 Feng Erkang, 368, citing *Qing shi gao*, 卷93.
40 For an extensive list of sumptuary regulations for funerals see *Da Qing huidian shili*, 768.445.
41 Feng Erkang, 367.
42 *Shizong shilu*, 10.14a.
43 *Shizong shilu*, 61.11b–12b.
44 *Shizong shilu*, 99.2b–3a.
45 *Shizong shilu*, 10.3a.
46 For differing opinions on court attire in the Qianlong reign, see two edicts of December 9, 1748 (3上諭561(一)), (3上諭561(二)).

cialdom in stretching down to the common people. They, too, were subject to sumptuary restrictions. Yongzheng also sought to regulate and make more filial their behavior through the creation and publication of standards of exemplary behavior. He issued an edict to certain provincial officials, requiring that they submit memorials telling the stories of local people in their provinces who had suffered greatly in the cause of filial piety.[47] Officials responded with stories like that of Zhang Tongyi 張桐一, who when his father was ill spared no expense in making him comfortable. When he died his son provided him with a funeral, despite his poverty.[48] Through these, and through the system of hierarchy, Yongzheng sought to tighten control over the common people.

At the level of imperial ideology the Yongzheng emphasis on hierarchy inescapably undercut the parallel conception of society. Certainly sumptuary regulations were not new in China. Surely, too, the idea of China depicted as hierarchy with the emperor at the top was not new. And yet, specifically in the realm of mourning rituals, the dramatic change in favor of sumptuary regulation – Yongzheng's hurry to say that what he was doing to bury Kangxi should not be done by others in the society – was another critical moment in the state's disengagement from the parallel conception of society.[49] It ran inescapably counter to the more traditional rhetoric of the Ming dynasty: that "the rituals of mourning and burial are the same in higher and lower society (*sangzang zhi li, tonghu shangxia* 喪葬之禮通乎上下)."[50]

In his well-known and well-publicized "Discourse on Factions (*Pengdang lun* 朋黨論)," promulgated in 1725, Yongzheng made somewhat explicit his belief that loyalty to the emperor supplanted, and was not parallel to, the love for parents. A strong statement such as this one had to be made obliquely. Yongzheng did so by making his point in an argument about the belief that factionalism grew out of loyalty to one's friends. If, Yongzheng argued, in taking office the official "gives himself (*shen* 身) to his prince, and can no longer consider himself as belonging to his father and mother" how much more so must he give up loyalty to his friends?[51]

47 The edict was dated October 3, 1723, and is copied in Memorial of Wu Li 吳裏, January 15, 1726 (2史科史書133).

48 Memorial of Wu Li 吳裏, January 15, 1726 (2史科史書133). For other examples see Memorial of Tian Wenjing 田文鏡, February 2, 1725 (2史科史書134) (outstanding examples of chaste widows from Henan); and Memorial of Han Liangfu 韓良琛, January 22, 1726 (2史科史書146) (story of filial wife who made a soup of her breast milk to cure a sick relative).

49 When Yongzheng did seem committed to the parallel conception of society, it was to bolster imperial power and prestige. In 1727 he prohibited marriages from taking place on the anniversaries of deaths of emperors and empresses. Hu Huaichen 胡懷琛 *Qing tan* 清談, (Shanghai: Guangyi Shuju ed., 1916), 6.4.

50 *Da Ming huidian*, 96.1a.

51 *Shizong shilu*, 22.18a. The quoted passage is from David S. Nivison, "Ho-shen and His Accusers: Ideology and Political Behavior in the Eighteenth Century," in *Confucianism in Action*, David S. Nivison and Arthur F. Wright, eds. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1959), 227. As Nivison notes, Yongzheng here was "treading on a thin edge of Confucian political theory."

The institutionalization of *duoqing*

When the Yongzheng Emperor came to the throne at age forty-five, he reigned over an empire that was more at peace than it had been in over eighty years. The three huge feudatories that had occupied much of South China were conquered and pacified, the last effective remnants of Ming loyalism had been squelched, and campaigns at the northern frontier had quieted forces of resistance there. But this period of growing stability did not mean officials were given more time to mourn their parents.

Yongzheng followed Kangxi's lead in limiting his officials' opportunities to mourn. One official who thought things might be otherwise was Yang Chaozeng 楊超曾, a junior compiler in the Hanlin Academy, who soon after Kangxi's death memorialized suggesting an end to the practice of *duoqing*.

Yang began his memorial with some general observations of the ways in which Yongzheng had observed mourning for Kangxi, referring to the commonly held belief that it was through displays of filial piety that the emperor governed all-under-heaven.

> It has always been the case that rulers rule the all-under-heaven with filial piety 以孝治天下. My Emperor in his mourning observances devoted himself to grief in the fulfillment of the *li*, and sought to put into practice the ancient rules by wearing three year's mourning. But your many officials repeatedly urged you, until you gave way to popular feeling and exchanged days for months [i.e., mourned for twenty-seven days instead of twenty-seven months]. And yet you still wore unadorned clothing (*sufu* 素服) in attending to court business, and refrained from superintending the principal rituals. Your imperially authored elegy was truly admirable. In greater filiality, it surpasses the ancients'. When your officials' ears and eyes heard and saw it, there was none who was not deeply moved and tearful.[52]

There was little substance to Yang's compliments. As he himself indicated, Yongzheng sacrificed very little in his mourning for Kangxi. He declined to wear mourning clothes, but wore only unadorned clothing. He carried on all official business, but merely refrained from some ritual duties. And he produced a beautiful elegy that might well not have come from his own hand. In some ways, Yongzheng did not have the luxury of a real mourning period, and had no choice but to seize immediately the reigns of government: He had succeeded to the throne after a power struggle among Kangxi's sons. Just as significantly, he evidently did not feel the need to make a show of his filial devotion.[53]

52 *Yongzheng chao Hanwen zhupi zouzhe huibian* 雍正朝漢文硃批奏摺彙編 (Taibei: Wenhai Chubanshe ed., 1965), 1.125.

53 Nor did he seem to have the strong emotional commitment to his father that would make him feel the need to mourn. He apparently had very little contact with Kangxi, who had lavished his attention on his favorite son, Inreng.

But for Yang Chaozeng there was an implicit logic in beginning a memorial requesting the abolition of *duoqing* with a description of the emperor's mourning for his own father. That logic was again the parallel conception of society, but here its invocation is almost meaningless. Yongzheng was not traditionally filial in his devotion to his father, Kangxi, and neither did he assume that loyalty emanated from filial piety.

In turning to his main concern, Yang Chaozeng noted that whether or not officials were willing to accept *duoqing*, the results would be equally bad, albeit for different reasons.

> Your majesty regulates all officials and people under heaven, and does so without self-interest. And yet in past years there have been among top bureaucrats several who have had to *duoqing*, and who were not able to complete the rituals. . . . They were ordered to stop up their grief and remain at their posts. If these people cannot endure it, then they must hide their feelings and overcome their intentions, and this is no way for them to "bend their bodies and express their emotions 曲體下情." If these people do endure it, then they are turning their back on their parents and forgetting their kin 背本忘親.[54]

In Yang's reasoning, it would be bad for an official to suppress his emotions unwillingly, and stay at his post and not mourn his parents. But even worse would be the situation in which that official willingly accepted *duoqing*. This was more perverse, in Yang's opinion, because it meant that such an official would not be loyal to the state. He noted further in the memorial:

> The ancients sought loyalty. An official would be at home when in mourning. If he is filial he will also be loyal. From this it can be asked how those lacking in both filial piety and loyalty can be selected for government service and be given responsibility.[55]

Yang's criticism was not directed against the emperor's forbidding his officials to follow their hearts and mourn their parents. Instead, he sought to change an immoral atmosphere in which officials often did not seek to mourn, and the emperor did not force them to do so.

Much is anachronistic about Yang Chaozeng's memorial. Even the term *duoqing*, as will be discussed in a subsequent section of this chapter, had largely fallen into disuse by the Yongzheng period. In stating that *duoqing* should not be tolerated in times of peace, Yang made reference to the old "military exception" that said mourning could only be curtailed when a military official was on an important assignment.

> Especially during a prosperous period *duoqing* should not be permitted. The *Record [of Rites]* states: "The superior man does not cut short another's mourning for his parent . . ." [This is only permissible in times of military emergency], not in a time of peace

54 *Yongzheng chao Hanwen zhupi zouzhe huibian*, 1.125–26.
55 *Yongzheng chao Hanwen zhupi zouzhe huibian*, 1.126.

in which there were no crises 太平無事之時. How in our times can there be duties that we consider to be absolutely unavoidable, which would call into use the military exception?[56]

It took Yongzheng until 1729 to deliver a lengthy edict in justification of *duoqing*.

Edict of 1729. When it comes to the rituals men perform at the death of a parent, these should not bring about the cessation of their natural emotions – surely this would be a hiding of their pain. I have personally experienced this [i.e., the death of a parent] and know it. For this reason in the case of provincial and capital officials at all ranks, there are some whom I have been unable to refrain from ordering to observe mourning at their posts 不得已令其在任守制者. This has been because the management of governmental affairs has required irregular actions to deal with abnormal circumstances (*congquan* 從權). This has never meant that I do not sympathize with their grief and with their family circumstances. In the case of Grand Secretaries Zhu Shi and Zhang Tingxi [seeking to] arrange mourning for their mothers, they were each given a short leave (*jiaqi* 假期) to return to their native places and put things in order (*liaoli* 料理). And after their return to the capital, I still ordered them to conduct business in plain clothes 令素服辦事, and they did not wear their regular court clothing, nor did they take part in court banquets. I did these things so that they could devote their heart-and-minds to the *li*. Some of those officials who are away from their posts have been specially ordered [by me] to remain at their posts. Others have been retained at the requests of governors and governors-general; and yet all have been given short periods of leave, in order to return to their native areas and manage their parent's funeral. When that is completed they return to their posts.

Now I am considering whether these officials on their return to their posts should take part in court rituals (*dianli* 典禮). If they assemble as usual, then their hearts certainly will not be at peace. If they do not participate, then I am afraid their absence will be misunderstood, and they will be criticized by others. This has certainly posed a dilemma. I did not know why I had ordered the officials to observe mourning at their posts, because of an important gap whose talents could not be interchanged [i.e., if afterward I permitted them to be substituted for at sacrificial observances]. Certainly my decision in this matter would be of importance, not just something to end up in the writings on ritual. Forcing the heart of these people who are trying to arrange mourning is something I can't do peacefully.

Hereafter, when capital or provincial officials of all ranks receive the rescript: "observe mourning at the capital," let them all wear plain clothing for a period of twenty-seven months, as a way of completing their filial devotion. If there should be at court the receiving of gifts, banqueting, sacrifices, court rituals [then they may participate].[57]

Although Yongzheng claims in this edict to sympathize with the grief and family circumstances of his officials who lose parents, we may doubt the lengths

56 *Yongzheng chao Hanwen zhupi zouzhe huibian*, 1.126.
57 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.780.

to which he was willing to go to support his statement.[58] The edict leaves us with the impression that to Yongzheng the death of a parent was not a circumstance that should give rise to traditional mourning practices, so much as it was a circumstance that needed to be dealt with, an affair that needed to be put in order (*liaoli* 料理). He did not follow the parallel conception of society.

The second half of the edict is taken up with the question of whether or not court officials whose parents died should participate in auspicious court rituals. Previously, officials in mourning were not permitted to participate in any auspicious (*ji* 吉) court rituals. Chief among these would be marriages, but they would also include gift presentations, banquets, and sacrifices. The rationale for the prohibition was that since mourning was an inauspicious event (*xiong* 凶), it was inappropriate for the person in mourning to attend these rituals.

The decision to permit court officials to attend auspicious rituals, as represented in the edict, appears to be a decision that Yongzheng made only after due reflection, weighing both sides of the question for the reader. And yet the logic is comprehensible for one side of the argument only: that if officials who have lost parents participate in these happy events, their "hearts will not be at peace." It is the other side of the argument that is difficult to follow. Yongzheng seems to be arguing that if they do not participate, it will be misunderstood and criticized by others. He also seems to be arguing that if one argues that an official should *duoqing* because he is too important to replace, then he is also too important to replace for the purposes of the ritual.

The arguments in favor of their participation seem unconvincing. Why should the nonparticipation of officials in the auspicious court rituals raise eyebrows, when it would be perfectly clear from their wearing unadorned clothing at court that they were observing mourning? And as to the second argument, it is not illogical to remove an official from participation in auspicious rituals, while maintaining him at court because he is needed for some practical reason. There is no logical reason for his presence to be all or nothing.

Logical or not, the overall effect was to reduce further the obligations of mourning. Under Yongzheng rules, the only obligation placed on the official mourning at his post was the wearing of plain clothes at court. This is not much more dramatic than the tiny black piece of fabric mourners in the United States sometimes pin to their lapels while in mourning for a parent or other close relative.

58 Yongzheng was in fact not very tolerant of people who delayed official duties to tend to filial obligations. When an official in charge of transporting grain to the north of the Great Wall delayed his trip to care for his sick and widowed mother, Yongzheng lowered him one rank. See Memorial of Lungkodo May 28, 1725 (2吏科史書173), for recommendation and approval.

The only traditional element to mourning that remained would be the grief that the official in mourning bore for his parent. But strangely this, too, seems obviated by the Yongzheng period. Absent are the long laments of officials like Zhu Shi and Zhang Boxing. This was perhaps because a new breed of official had come into the bureaucracy. But even Zhu Shi, who had begged to return home when his father had died in the Kangxi period, was strangely silent when his mother died in Yongzheng. It may have been that the policy of *duoqing* was so thoroughly entrenched that he knew it was hopeless to appeal. And yet even the poems lamenting the unmourned-for parent are absent.

A final possible explanation has to do with external political circumstances. In the preceding chapter it was suggested that the dynastic transition brought about a crisis in the lives of many elite families (families which typically served the Ming and which would consider serving the Qing) that was both personal and political. Perhaps by the Yongzheng period that crisis had settled, and lost its political dimensions.

Yongzheng also worked to ensure that the impact of mourning on the bureaucracy would be minimized. In 1725, he instituted strict guidelines for governors and governors-general to follow before leaving their posts to observe mourning. It will be remembered that an official who heard of the death of a parent was expected to stop everything and hasten home (*bensang* 奔喪). The first Ming emperor had been so committed to this system that he ordered his officials to return and mourn their parents without even waiting to submit a report. Later he retreated from this impractical position, and said that a report should first be submitted. In the system imposed during the Yongzheng period, governors and governors-general who arranged mourning had first to select from among their top provincial officials someone to be recipient of the seals of office, and to carry out important unfinished business. The governor or governor-general would then wait for an imperial edict authorizing his return.

> When governors and governors-general arrange mourning, they must not hurriedly turn over the seals of office (*song yin* 送印), or their important documents. Instead they must choose one from the group consisting of the lieutenant-governor, the judicial commissioner, the salt controller, or the grain intendant to take charge of these. The governor or governor-general must then await an imperial edict before leaving his post.[59]

In 1732, Yongzheng prolonged the waiting period for the commencement of mourning even further, by issuing an edict ordering that all officials await the arrival of replacement officials despatched by their superiors (*shang si* 上司) before they depart on their mourning leaves. The edict made clear that this

59 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.779–80. For a Qianlong affirmation of this position, see Edict of December 1, 1748 (3上諭561(二)).

policy was to be observed whether or not there was a military exigency (*junxu banli* 軍需辦理).[60]

Yongzheng also restricted the categories of officials who were permitted to return home and mourn. In the second year of his reign a rule was instituted saying that "capital officials charged with military responsibilities including and subordinate to those assigned to matters of reporting and control may not arrange mourning, neither may they be given leave to bury their parents." An exception was made for instances in which there was no other son to superintend the burial.[61]

Besides treating civil officials as military officials for purposes of mourning leave, the edict demonstrates once again the ways in which dealing with the death of a parent was viewed by the state now as simply an unpleasant duty to be arranged. By leaving a window for cases in which the "military" official was an only son, the edict emphasizes the interchangeability of sons, undercutting the ritually central role of the eldest son. Traditionally, the eldest son played such an important role at the funeral that if he predeceased his father and could not lead the rituals, his duties would be performed by the eldest grandson. The state was effectively declaring that the most important consideration in the running of the funeral was no longer sibling order, but service to the state. An official was excepted from filial duties, even if he was the eldest son.[62]

The bureaucratization of mourning

The mourning system as it had evolved by the Yongzheng period was thus subtly but profoundly different in both ideology and practice from what had come before. As the system worked in practice, an official who received notice of the death of a parent would have to notify his superior, who would in turn make a recommendation to the president of the Board of Personnel, in Peking. The president would then make a recommendation to the emperor, usually as part of a routine memorial that would deal with several officials together. The president would include the names of each official, a recommended disposition, and a brief rationale for the decision. An imperial rescript would then be added, presumably by the emperor, that generally followed the recommendations of the president of the Board of Personnel.[63] The system thus left ultimate

60 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.780. If the superior official failed to dispatch a replacement official, he was fined six month's salary. If the replacement failed to go to his post with alacrity, he was fined one year's salary. Ibid.

61 Memorial of Maiju 邁柱, n.d. (2例行題本758).

62 See, for example, Memorial of Wang Chaoen 王朝恩 (2吏科史書172).

63 It is difficult to determine whether or not the rescripts on these documents came from the emperor's hand. The reason is that the originals have been lost, and my work was done from holographic copies that appear in the record book *Like shishu* 吏科史書, in the Qing archives. The scribes who copied these memorials would note the date of the memorial, the date it was

control in the hands of the emperor, while leaving the routine workings of the system to a trusted minister.[64]

Under the system of Qing dyarchy, there were two presidents of the Board of Personnel at any one time: one Manchu and one Han Chinese. By staffing the position with officials who shared his view of the bureaucracy, Yongzheng was able to ensure that needed officials were kept at their posts.

His first choice was Lungkodo 隆可多 (d. 1728), who occupied the Manchu position from 1723 until 1726, when he fell into disfavor.[65] All the early memorials dealing with whether to permit officials to return and mourn came from Lungkodo. And it is not until after his fall that these memorials began to come from the Han president, Yang Mingshi 楊名時, in 1726.[66]

Yongzheng placed tremendous trust in Lungkodo during those early years of the reign, and showered him with the most prestigious honors emperors gave their officials.[67] Cooperation between Lungkodo and Yongzheng was responsible for the new policies that quietly made suspension of mourning frequent occurrences.[68]

Examining the roughly six-month period between March 6, 1725, and September 10, 1725, will allow us both to observe the system as it operated on a quotidian basis, and to see some of the diversity within it. This period was chosen largely at random, but also because it would represent the time when Lungkodo was still serving as president of the Board of Personnel, and the time when the process of arranging for mourning leaves would have settled into a pattern.

Lungkodo's memorial of May 28, 1725, was typical. In it he reported to the emperor on the disposition of cases from April 28 to May 11, 1725. During that thirteen-day period there were four cases of requesting mourning, one of requesting to return to care for sick parents, and two requests for retirement. Lungkodo recommended approval for three of the four requests for mourning.

presented to the emperor, and the imperial rescript. Thus it is impossible to study the handwriting of the rescript to determine whether it is that of the Yongzheng Emperor.

64 The power to determine ultimately whether an official should or should not return to his home area was one that Yongzheng had good reason to retain. It is not inconceivable that in some instances he would be eager for an official to leave office. Three years in mourning might be enough time to break the rhythm of an official who was growing too powerful.

65 Qian Shifu 錢實甫, ed., *Qingdai zhiguan nianbiao* 清代職官年表 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1980), 1.204–5.

66 *Qingdai zhiguan nianbiao*, 1.206.

67 Yongzheng gave Lungkodo the title Maternal Uncle in 1723, and later that year made him Grand Guardian of the Heir Apparent. In the following year he was awarded the double-eyed peacock feather. *Eminent Chinese*, 553.

68 Although Yongzheng period pronouncements would guardedly refer to it as happening infrequently (such as in Yang Chaozeng's memorial and Yongzheng's edict, cited above), an edict promulgated at the very beginning of the Qianlong period noted that it had become *guchang* – constant or customary. See note 94, below.

In the fourth he recommended observation of mourning at the post. The emperor's rescript was "Let it be as recommended."[69]

The memorials Lungkodo and the presidents after him submitted tended to be highly formulaic. They began with the name of an official, his rank and place of work. Then they listed his deceased parent's name, and when and where he or she had "died of the illness (*binggu* 病故)." Then they would state the date on which the son learned of the death (*wenji* 聞計 or *wenfu* 聞訃). The document would end with the phrase "Therefore, in accordance with the statutes he wishes to return to his native area and arrange mourning." Since this phrase concluded the entry for each official for whom mourning leave was granted, the emperor or other reader could refer quickly to the first and last lines to see the individual and the disposition of the case. When allowing mourning was not recommended, this would be discussed in the last sentences. Similar memorials were used to discuss officials' returning from mourning, and the granting of new assignments to them.[70]

Sometimes memorials recommending that an official not be permitted to mourn dealt entirely with a single individual. In a memorial of September 25, 1725, the president of the Board of War "with acting appointment (*shuli* 署理) as president of the Board of Personnel" memorialized in the case of Cao Dase 曹達色, whose work in river conservancy was at a pressing point when he learned of the death of his mother. She had died on June 26, 1725, and he received notice of the death on July 25, 1725. The emperor's imperial rescript read: "Let Cao Dase be treated in accordance with the recommendation of the Director-General [of the Grand Canal]; he will observe mourning at his post."[71]

The memorial discussing the case stated that Cao's governor-general had sent a report to the president of the Board of War requesting that Cao be required to mourn at his post. Although the governor-general clearly favored retaining Cao, the president of the Board recommended that the request be rejected, out of respect for filial piety. Yongzheng sided with the governor-general, however, ordering only that "Cao Dase should, in accordance with the request of the Governor-General, observe mourning at his post."

Beyond suggesting that Yongzheng tended to favor requests to have officials

69 Memorial of Lungkodo, May 27, 1725 (2史科史書173). For a similar memorial see Memorial of Lungkodo, April 26, 1725 (2史科史書172). Lungkodo did not always include the period of time during which he had received the requests.

70 These memorials might deal with a single individual or with a large group. For the former, see Memorial of Lungkodo, April 14, 1725 (2史科史書172); for the latter, Memorial of Lungkodo, April 5, 1725 (2史科史書172). According to *Qingguo xing zhengfa fanlun*, 733, only capital banner personnel were assured of returning to their original positions.

71 Memorial of Sunju 孫柱, September 25, 1725 (2史科史書177). In an April 16, 1725, memorial, Lungkodo memorialized on the case of an official, Zhang Zhikun 張之坤, whose father had died on September 29, 1724. On January 19, 1725, word reached the son at the capital. In this case also mourning was not recommended. The rescript read only "Let it be as recommended." Memorial of Lungkodo, April 5, 1726 (2史科史書172).

mourn at their posts, the memorial may tell us something about Yongzheng's attitudes toward the professionalization of his bureaucracy. The memorial discussing Cao's case stressed his expertise in doing river work and flood prevention – a talent that may have been decisive for Yongzheng. In other memorials, too, specialized knowledge seemed to play a role. In some instances officials would be called back early from mourning to fill a specific position, because of their special abilities.[72]

There were a substantial number of cases that deviated from normal procedures. These differences are accounted for by the fact that the informality of the system permitted a great deal of flexibility. In some cases, memorials requesting mourning leave were sent directly to the emperor. In these instances he might consider mourning leave a foregone conclusion, and add only the rescript "Let the Board of Personnel be so informed."[73] In other cases the emperor would pass the request to the Board of Personnel, which would then recommend a disposition.[74] There was also flexibility in the type of mourning leave granted. The start of mourning, for example, might be delayed to permit an official to complete a task or mission before returning to commence mourning.[75]

The new language of mourning

Once mourning ceased to be a given, the term *duoqing* almost completely disappeared from official parlance. Beyond the fact that it possessed bad

72 See Memorial of Lungkodo, August 17, 1725 (2吏科史書176) (knowledge of local customs); and Memorial of Sunju 孫柱, September 15, 1725 (2吏科史書177) (particularly ethical individual to serve as censor).

73 In one such case the mourner was a local magistrate in Fujian, and the memorialist was the governor of Fujian, Huang Guocai 黃國材. Five months elapsed between the date of death and the time a memorial was issued informing the Board of Personnel. The death occurred on October 1, 1724. News of the death reached the son on December 26, 1724. His memorial to the emperor was dated January 23, 1725, and presented to the emperor on April 13, 1725. Memorial of Huang Guocai 黃國材, January 23, 1725 (2吏科史書170). That the son was aware of the death for more than one month before he composed a memorial requesting to come back shows how little emphasis he placed on a hasty return to his home. See also Memorial of Peng Genyi 彭根翼, May 8, 1725 (2吏科史書173).

Yongzheng could break or bend the rules, of course, as he considered doing in the instance of an official who asked for leave to rebury his parents. They had been interred in a temporary grave that was threatened by wind and rain. Yongzheng ordered the Board of Personnel to discuss the matter and issue a recommendation. Memorial of Jiang Qiu 江球, April 20, 1725 (2吏科史書172).

74 Memorial of Tian Wenjing 田文鏡, February 2, 1725 (2吏科史書170). In this case the memorialist and mourner were from the same ranks as in the previous instance. The death occurred on November 14, 1724. The death announcement reached the son on January 15, 1725, almost two months later. The memorial to the emperor was dated February 2, 1725, and was presented to the emperor March 7, 1725.

75 Memorial of Lungkodo, May 28, 1725 (2吏科史書173); Memorial of Sunju 孫柱, September 15, 1725 (2吏科史書177). In Memorial of Jiang Yong 江永, August 12, 1725 (2吏科史書176), the memorialist thanked the emperor for granting him special leave to rebury his parents. Jiang himself was ill, and expected to die soon.

connotations, it no longer served a purpose in a society in which individuals' mourning leaves might be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Even before its disappearance, *duoqing* had lost its original meaning. It had first been used to mean the abrupt termination of the period of mourning to meet with a pressing military situation. Later it came to mean the complete forgoing of the period of mourning. Still later, when Kangxi tried to change the set of practices that made up mourning, *duoqing* became meaningless because people were told they could "observe mourning at their posts (*zai ren shouzhi*)."

The rise of the phrase "observe mourning at the post" explains another terminological change in the Yongzheng and Qianlong period. The phrase in official parlance that was usually used to mean "arrange mourning" was *dingyou* 丁憂 (lit. "arranging grief"). But during the Yongzheng and Qianlong periods the most commonly used phrase was *shouzhi* 守制 (lit. "observing regulations"). The most dramatic example of this change is in the Qianlong edition of the *Collected Qing Institutions*. Although since the Ming edition the section on arranging mourning had been called "*dingyou*," in the Qianlong edition it was for the first time changed to *shouzhi*.

There are several possible explanations for this change. The most likely one is that *shouzhi* is half of the phrase *zai ren shouzhi* ("observe mourning at the post"), a phrase that was becoming much more common in the early and mid-Qing. Moreover, the term *dingyou* might be avoided because it had always been used in regulations to indicate the return of the bereaved to his home. When people became more likely to remain at their posts and mourn, *shouzhi* began to seem a more appropriate phrase to describe the process.

Another old word comes into use at this time: *bensang*, literally to "hurry and mourn." In the Ming period it still kept its literal meaning. It meant that the filial son should "drop everything" and return home, following the guidelines in the classic ritual texts. And although this term also fell into disuse in the early Qing, by the mid-Qing it had returned, but was used to refer to the brief time allotted the bereaved son to return home and mourn his parents.[76] In circumstances in which five or more months might pass before the official was given leave to commence mourning at home, *bensang*'s old meaning would be useless. Thus it was resurrected to provide only a veneer of filiality to an act that would have been considered unfilial in the Ming.

Qianlong ascends the throne

During the first few years of the Qianlong reign there was a resurgence of interest in matters relating to the funeral. In part this was because the presence of a new emperor on the throne raised the possibility of new policy directions.

76 Memorial of Lungkodo, April 7, 1725 (2吏科史書171) states, "let him *bensang* for a period of months . . ."

It may also be because in the idealistic first years of his reign Qianlong took a very active interest in governmental affairs, writing long rescripts on many memorials. A third possibility is that the loss of his father, Yongzheng, prompted him to think through the importance of mourning and death rituals.

Part of Qianlong's early idealism would lead to a desire for a general revivification of Confucianism. In 1736 he commissioned the *Complete Qing Rituals* (*Da Qing tong li* 大清通禮).[77] This work was a collection of all rituals having to do with life in the Qing, and prescribed rituals for all people and all occasions. Emblematic of developments in ritual during the Qianlong period, it was a piece of scholarship that could involve officials at court, while having little genuine impact on society. It represents the culmination of a trend that we observed in the Kangxi period: scholarship on mourning by officials could serve as a substitute for practicing it.[78]

In the early years of the Qianlong reign there was a flurry of attempts to make people in society more orthodox in their funerary observances. Looking at several examples will allow us to see the nature of these attempted reforms.

In 1736, Assistant Censor-in-Chief Li Hui 李徽 memorialized suggesting that the *Classic of Filial Piety* be added to the "Four Classics."[79] The edict responding to this memorial agreed with the need for a definitive text that would clarify the rituals "from the Son of Heaven all the way down to the common people."[80] But the edict also reviewed the textual scholarship that had been done on the work, and concluded that since the Sui and Tang periods it was known to have been a forgery.[81] The memorial concluded by saying that "Li Hui asks that the book [*Classic of Filial Piety*] be added to the Four Books" only out of a desire for personal aggrandizement. "He would have it that all under heaven, for all time, consider that the four books were selected by Zhu Xi, and the five books selected by Li Hui."[82]

77 This work in 50卷 was not completed until 1759, and it was not printed until 1818. A second edition in 54卷 was commissioned in 1819, and completed in 1824. *Eminent Chinese*, 805.

78 See footnote 114, Chapter 3.

79 These were: the *Great Learning* 大學, the *Analects* 論語, the *Doctrine of the Mean* 中庸, and the *Mencius* 孟子. These were selected by Zhu Xi, and were considered the primary Confucian texts.

80 *Gaozong Chun Huangdi shilu* 高宗純皇帝實錄 [cited as *Gaozong shilu*], *Qing shilu* 清實錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1986), 12.5a.

81 "But that Liu Xuan 劉炫 forged the work was mentioned in the *Sui shu* 隋書, and in the *Tang hui yao* 唐會要. It was also discussed in selected writings of Lu Deming 陸德明, so that the Confucians early knew it was a forgery, and did not wait for Wu Cheng 吳澄 to tell them so." *Gaozong shilu* 12.5a.

According to Kuwabara Jitsuzo, there have been many debates over whether the *Xiao jing* was the genuine record of a conversation between Confucius and Zengzi. After examining the evidence, Kuwabara concludes that the text was probably written by members of the household of Zengzi, who perhaps made some additions to it. Kuwabara Jitsuzo, 桑原騭藏, Chūgoku no kōdō 中國の孝道 (Reprint ed., University of Michigan Library, n.p., 1977), 27.

82 *Gaozong shilu*, 12.6a.

Li Hui's memorial was characteristic of the types and nature of ritual change in the Qianlong period. By making the *Classic of Filial Piety* a classic on a par with the *Analects* and other works that had constituted the Four Books, a statement might be made about the general importance of proper observances for parents. But realistically, this would be a showy act that had little real impact on society, though it might bring some fame to its author.

There were other suggestions for reforms that show an honest desire for change. In a memorial dated July 14, 1741, Jiangsu Provincial Surveillance Commissioner Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀 memorialized requesting that a statute be put in place regulating the problem of unburied corpses. This was an old problem, Chen wrote, the origins of which lay in beliefs that delayed burial, as people waited for the perfect grave site. It was also caused by people neglecting to see the importance of an early burial.[83] Chen's memorial contains a lengthy study of the problem, and shows that as early as the Wei and Jin dynasties there were attempts by rulers to enforce early burial. "From this we know that the old tradition of leaving [corpses] unburied is not what ought to be," he concluded.

In Chen Hongmou's thinking the most pernicious aspect of the problem was that it was common even in elite families.

> Although the common people frequently leave corpses unburied, these days among the official class (*shidafu* 士大夫) it happens frequently. And in southern provinces it is more severe. They either place their dead in temporary burials within the house, or they put them in an outdoor wild place, where they stay for tens of years and are not buried, and fire or wind or rain can destroy them. Nothing is more extreme than this.

Any solution to the problem, Chen suggested, would have to begin with the official class. He suggested that officials who sat for examinations would first have to submit affidavits from officials in their local areas, attesting to the fact that they had no unburied corpses at home.

Chen's memorial received the rescript "Let the Grand Secretaries discuss and memorialize." Fortunately, a holographic copy of the memorial submitted by Ortai and others in response to this request survives. Translating it in full reveals the disposition of Chen Hongmou's suggestion, as well as the general atmosphere surrounding his proposed changes.

> Discussion Memorial of Ortai. The Jiangsu Provincial Surveillance Commissioner Chen Hongmou memorialized requesting a statute be put in place regulating the practices of those who leave corpses unburied. His memorial received the rescript "Let the grand secretaries discuss and memorialize." In that memorial he finds that the problem of leaving corpses unburied is an established one of very old standing; one that

83 Memorial of Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀, July 14, 1741 (2禮儀硃批7). We must keep open the possibility that this latter reason was a veiled criticism of the practice of *duoqing*. Officials being kept at their posts would often mean delayed burials for their parents.

it would be difficult to regulate by changing laws and instituting punishment by the heavy bamboo. A few empty words (*xuwen* 虛文) instituted uniformly, ordering a quick burial, and even strict punishment of offenders, would not prevent this old practice.

He therefore requests that we begin with a law that would investigate the behavior of those in the official class who have left corpses unburied. He suggests that beginning on the day when the *jinshi* examination is set, your majesty give the following order: "Whenever an official is waiting for an appointment, or to fill a vacancy, he should be examined to determine whether he has unburied corpses at home, or corpses in temporary burial; those candidates' names should be sent to the proper Board. As for *jinshi* and *juren* candidates, they also should be examined to determine whether they have unburied corpses. They should be required to submit affidavits when they sit for the examination. If their clansmen attempt to fabricate the writing, or if they try to deceive with the help of local officials when they submit these affidavits, they shall be investigated and punished. As for those waiting for appointment, or to fill a vacancy, if they have unburied corpses at home they should be permitted according to regulations to state this clearly to the Board, and return to their home to superintend the burial. After this they may take up their posts. As for those presently in office, who have unburied corpses, they should be permitted, within a half a year, to report this and receive leave; when the burial is complete they may return to their posts. If they seek to conceal the fact [that they have unburied corpses], and do not report it, they will be seriously dealt with.

The memorial [of Chen Hongmou] also raises the reasons for leaving corpses unburied, of which there are two. One is that the relatives of the deceased are deceived by geomancy. The other is that they do not follow the ritual regulations (*lizhi* 禮制). Perhaps they arrange for ceremonies for the delivery of souls from purgatory, or they arrange feasts. They devote their strength to these things and cannot manage [the burial].

The memorial [of Chen Hongmou] also requests that provincial officials be informed that in matters of burial they should respect all ritual practices (*dianzhi* 典制). They should not arrange Buddhist things in seeking after bliss in the next world (*mingfu* 冥福). They should not waste money in yearning after vulgarities. It is necessary that the official class take the lead in making the small people follow their example.

We [Grand Secretaries speaking] have examined into the regulations regarding funerals and mourning. The *li* has a fixed period, in which to find an end for the body and soul (*ti po* 體魄), and put the ancestors at peace. If the corpse is stored for an excessive period, because people follow each other in pursuing bad habits, then the result will be a perversion of the ritual teaching. It was for this reason that in November/December of 1735, an edict was promulgated ordering officials at the local level (*shoutu zhi guan* 守土之官) to lead the [common people] to reform, so that burials may be carried out according to the stated periods. This was well accepted. Now Chen Hongmou's memorial seeks to control the base practice (*louxi* 陋習) of leaving corpses unburied by beginning with the official class, correctly seeking to punish it at that level. It also orders that they not be deluded by the doctrines of geomancy, seeking to follow vulgar writings that usurp the obligations of others.

Certainly [Chen Hongmou's ideas] emphasize the importance of human relations, and teach proper customs. And yet the urgent business of divining for the burial location so as to put at peace both [deceased] parent and child may not be accomplished with a hasty interment. Certainly there are some who, intending a delay, endure the abandonment of the deceased parent. And there are quite a few others who become deluded when they are choosing the grave site, or when they are wasting resources on extravagances. And yet there are also those whose feelings are manifest in the many affairs [associated with the funeral]. They too harbor a hidden pain over what they are unable to accomplish [for the deceased].

Although this problem may be controlled with the law (*fa* 法), if we do as Chen Hongmou memorializes, requiring that officials waiting for assignments, waiting to fill vacancies, and those preparing to sit for examinations give affidavits, and even that all officials return to their native places to complete the burial of unburied parents; if we do this, then still we fear that we invite the corrupt practices of Yamen clerks who are obstinately bent on extortion. Such scoundrels will use this as a pretext for blackmail, threatening to lay a charge against [upright officials]. This would stir up more disorder and disturbance in local areas. Certainly it is the case that strict legal measures are not as good as changing through the natural disposition. Therefore we should respectfully obey past edicts. We should order each of the said governors-general to give orders according to instructions received, that civil authorities at the local level should genuinely carry out. Let them urge reform, so that none fall into the mire of vulgar customs. Let them see that the funeral is carried out in a timely fashion. This is our best option. We ask that former precedents be observed. Rescript: "Let it be as recommended."[84]

In this memorial Ortai takes what on the surface is a traditional approach. He argues that the best way to solve the problem is not through the creation of the legal substatute that Chen Hongmou requested. Rather, it would be to order provincial officials to encourage people to change their behavior. "Certainly it is the case that strict legal measures are not as good as changing through the natural disposition." Here was a traditional argument for the superiority of *li* over *fa* (law).

To the twentieth-century reader, however, it is readily apparent that the traditional argument is an excuse to conceal the real issue: that such a substitute would be unenforceable, and would create opportunities for "corrupt practices by Yamen clerks." So far had control slipped at the local levels that all that was possible were superficial normative changes at the top of society, and the hope that these would trickle down to the lower classes.

Chen Hongmou was evidently aware of how feeble a mere change at the top of society would be, and for that reason he suggested the avoidance of "a few empty words" that would not solve the problem. Chen, much more sincere than Ortai in his wish to solve the problem, appeals to law as the only solution for his time, when the old parallel conception of society as a source of regulating the common people's practices had broken down. With no one observing

84 Memorial of Ortai et al., August 7, 1741 (3議覆史書1611(一)).

the *li, fa* was the only hope. Thus, the practice of leaving corpses unburied continued in the local areas, despite the laments of stalwart Confucians like Guo Tingxi, who wrote a poem on the problem of unburied corpses in Ruijin, Jiangxi.[85]

Qianlong memorials that dealt with new rules for mourning practices tended to emphasize appearances. In 1737, for example, an edict ordered officials on mourning leave, who had returned to their home areas, to change into plain clothes before going to the prefectural capital. While there, they were not to take part in banquets, or pay visits to local officials for the purpose of seeking personal advantage.[86] A similar emphasis on appearances is evident in a 1765 edict, which ordered that officials at home on mourning leave should not accept teaching positions in academies. If they chose to teach, they should do so in their homes only.[87]

Changed rules for officials who were bannermen, too, revealed an almost superficial emphasis on Confucian values. Qianlong innovations in mourning rules for them showed a complicated patchwork that seemingly made bannermen's practices more the equivalent of those for Han Chinese. A new rule in 1736, the first year of Qianlong's reign, ordered that banner personnel on provincial assignments should mourn for twenty-seven months, like Han officials.[88] Mourning by capital banner personnel was changed also. In 1746 they were required to arrange mourning for grandparents, as well as parents.[89]

At least for a time, Manchus at the capital were to mourn one hundred days, while those on provincial assignments (which were more conspicuous) were to mourn for twenty-seven months, just like Han officials.[90] The place of mourning in each case was assumed to be Peking.[91] But by 1749 Qianlong could not

85 Guo Tingxi 郭廷翕, "Ruijin xi song er huo dili yinmou qinbi you huolian shu shinian wei xi zhe wei yongshi pian 瑞金喜訟而貨地理陰謀侵逼有禍連數十年未息者為詠是篇," *Qing shi duo* 清詩鐸 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1960, 1983), 26.842. Guo Tingxi was the son of Guo Xiu, see *Eminent Chinese*, 436–37. On Guo Tingxi see Li Junzhi 李濬之, *Qing huajia shi shi* 清畫家詩史 (1930, 1983), 上.28a.

86 *Da Qing huidian shili* (Guangxu), 138.780. On the day that such officials returned to their posts they were reduced in rank three degrees and transferred. Ibid.

87 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.781–82. The edict refers to a memorial by the governor-general of Yunnan, Yang Yingju 楊應琚, who noted that an institution named Orchid Mountain Academy (Lanshan Shuyuan 蘭山書院) invited officials who had returned to the area on mourning leave to teach there.

88 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.777.

89 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.776.

90 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.777.

91 See also Memorial of Zhu Fengying 朱鳳英, January 7, 1740 (2禮儀硃批5), which notes that cemeteries for banner people were in the eastern suburbs of Peking. Peking would be the assumed residence of Manchu and Mongol garrison bannermen only until 1756, when Qianlong ended the requirement that they be repatriated (*guiqi* 歸旗). I am indebted to Mark Elliott for this information. See his "Manchu Widows and Ethnicity in Qing China," and *The Manchu Way*, both forthcoming.

resist using the services of those provincial assignees who were staying in Peking, and ordered that their banners make them available for duty.[92] Qianlong, as Yongzheng and Kangxi before him, was demonstrating an unwillingness to conform to mourning rules when they were not advantageous to him personally, or denied him the use of officials who were within his immediate circle. A similar intent is evident in an edict of 1781, which ruled that bondservant members of the Han banners were permitted to mourn for a full twenty-seven months, so long as they were not members of the Imperial Household Department, the series of offices that was responsible for serving the personal needs of the emperor and his family.[93]

The abolition of "mourning at the post"

It is in the context of the kind of changes that were sought in the Qianlong period that we must view the abolition of the practice of "observing mourning at the post." On November 14, 1735, an edict was issued prohibiting the practice.

It is prohibited to observe mourning at one's post. The edict stated: The love of parents for children is "as vast as the boundless heavens," and the funeral rituals take the cutoff of three years as a proper endpoint for the grief of the filial child. The three year mourning period must not be discontinued, lest all conduct be baseless. When the Duke of Lu left his father's body, he put on mourning clothes and went to war. Confucius considered that if there were a way [for him to observe mourning], then it should have been done. In ancient times those who served the feudal lords, although they had a ritual which allowed them to serve their state immediately after the burial, those ancient officials never had to leave their hometowns. They could personally supervise the dressings and encoffinings, and manage the burial. Although they went about in their mourning dress, they could perform their filial duties in peace. Today those in service are several hundred thousand *li* from their homes. Of preparing the corpse for burial, of this they know nothing. An auspicious day for the funeral has not been set, and they are peacefully at their posts. Can the emotions be self-completing? From the lower levels of local government on up there are serious deficiencies. Among them are governors and governors-general who recommend "observe mourning at the post (*zai ren shouzhi*)", and an edict is promulgated permitting it, so that now it has become constant (or customary – *guchang* 故常). It has reached even to the lowest level officials of the prefecture and county. Among their ranks are those whom the governors and

92 The edict noted: "Manchus and Mongols are not as numerous as Han officials, and moreover Bannermen ought not to be permitted to remain at leisure without serving in their official capacities. Hereafter Manchu and Mongol officials serving in provincial appointments who arrange mourning, after coming to the capital and observing a 100 day period of mourning, let their Banner take them into their charge and present them to the emperor [for official service]. That service may be in their Banner, or it may be in one of the Ministries. I will deliberate on their circumstances and put them into official service." *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.777.

93 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.778.

governors-general closely trust, and whom they prefer to retain. In reality there are those who wish to be retained. And there are many who seek to obtain the request, and if they do not succeed they take it as shameful.

Now, serving parents in filial piety will result in a loyalty that can be transferred to the ruler. It makes officials more benevolent and filial. If you force them to cut short their emotion, then stupidly they cannot find an end to the day, and they will be distressed and confused. Carelessly they will go about their public duties. If you are at peace with this, then you will have [in your service] men who can endure perversity, and who covet glory. If the state (*guojia* 國家) can be at peace using them, and having them govern officials and people, can it also be at peace bearing their methods of operation? After this their land, responsibility, affairs, and opportunities, necessarily will not be diminished.

Certainly men have no way of representing each other [at their funerary duties]. Grants of recommendations [for observing mourning at the post] should be in accordance with the merits of the case. Let all the excess cases be stopped. Let it forever be ordered and made a statute."[94]

This edict tells us a great deal about the system of "observing mourning at the post" as it existed by the early Qianlong period. *Duoqing*, no longer referred to as such, was common (*guchang* 故常), and it had reached down into the lowest levels of local government. Although it was supposed to be initiated for good cause, oftentimes people initiated it on their own, and felt shameful if it was not granted.

And so a statute was put in place ending *duoqing*. But the problem was that for all the high-flown language of the edict, there was no real mechanism for putting it into practice. The edict did not say that the practice of "mourning at the post should cease," but that it should only be done when necessary, "in accordance with the merits of the case." Not long after this regulation was put in place, an official named Bohai 薄海 (*jinshi* 1712) memorialized suggesting an end to the practice of observing mourning at the post.[95] His request likewise resulted in no absolute rule. The edict responding said only that observing mourning at the post "genuinely should not happen often."

Another such "prohibition" was put into effect in 1764. An edict of that year criticized collusion between Senior Officials and their subordinates, who worked together to have the subordinate avoid mourning. As the edict described the practice:

94 *Gaozong shilu*, 4.10b–12a.

95 Bohai went so far as to suggest that officials who had observed mourning at their posts in the past be given mourning leave. Qianlong accepted the idea of keeping observation of mourning at the post infrequent, but rejected the idea of sending home officials who had observed at their posts in the past. "But my ordering the mass of officials to put on mourning, would originally have to do with the future, and not with what is past. That time which has passed is surely distant, and ordering them to observe mourning now would be transferring funerary matters into distant times [i.e., death pollution long after death], and this is something that is without precedent." *Gaozong shilu*, 2b–3a.

The Senior Officials retain their subordinates at their posts with the excuse of sympathizing and holding in high regard their subordinates' feelings. Their subordinates in turn intend to stay at their posts by seeking the Senior Officials' help.[96]

The practice was prohibited, although no punishments were put in place.

By 1785 there was another edict criticizing the practice of mourning at the post. It referred to two memorials by Senior Officials requesting that specific subordinates be retained at their posts.[97] The edict is interesting for its use of pre-Qing language, such as *duoqing*, to refer to mourning at the post, and because of its historical accuracy with regard to the old rules of mourning – it mentioned the military exception, specifically.

Having people curtail mourning and return to their posts (*duoqing qifu*) is not how filial piety is taught and importance given to human relations (*jiaoxiao dunlun* 教孝敦倫). The ancients (*guren*) would only do so for military matters (*junlü zhi shi* 軍旅之事), and did so only sporadically (*ouyi xingzhi* 偶一行之). If an area should not be at peace, as in the case of Salar's rebellion, then military matters are important.[98] When local leaders of the county and prefecture are arranging mourning, their governor or governor-general should not memorialize for the authority to keep them at their posts. When it comes to matters of fixing walls and brasswork (*changtong* 廠銅) how can these be considered military matters? How is it possible that one person is needed to manage the whole thing start to finish, and thereby disrupt an important principle? And how could they depute another person to finish their relative's funeral? Is it really necessary to await the return of the dead to life before saying it is not necessary to exhaust one's official duties?

Probably governors and governors-general in writing these memorials are not influenced by favoritism or the desire to parade their conscientiousness. Instead they are probably motivated by the officials' own entreaties. At the same time, it cannot be solely the local official's motivation that results in the official being ordered to remain at his post. He sits guarding his official salary, ambitious to remain in office and forgetful of his parents.[99]

There was tremendous emphasis on verbiage, and the creation of more rules, but in all this the practice did not really end.[100] The mere promulgation

96 The edict further lamented: "The state appoints talented people as its officials according to its various needs. Why is it necessary to have the use of one or two people? Why cannot we afford to lose the services of these one or two people for two or three years instead of risking destruction of this important rule? Certainly this is not necessary." *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.781.

97 The memorials were from He Yucheng 何裕城, who requested that the magistrate Wang Chuiji 王垂紀 be retained at his post to work on construction of the prefectural city wall; and Fugang 富綱, who requested that the Yunzhou 雲州 Department Magistrate Song Changcheng 宋昌琤 be withheld to manage affairs of the Ningtai Depot 甯臺廠.

98 Salar 撒拉爾 was a *saisan*, or important military leader in Sungaria, who surrendered to Qianlong in 1750. *Eminent Chinese*, 10.

99 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 139.789.

100 Qianlong, for example, could easily deny mourning leave to officials whose work facilitated the collection of tax revenues. An edict of 1754 noted: "The Governor of Fengtian prefecture 奉天府 [Mukden, in Liaoning] Oboo 鄂寶 memorialized, raising the issue of the magistrate of Chengde county 承德縣 [in Fengtian prefecture] Fu Chang 富昌 who is presently on mourn-

of a rule was itself a kind of ritual, a nod to the old parallel conception of society. And much of that verbiage, moreover, provides clues to the extent to which the parallel conception of society, and the model of a grief-stricken official dropping everything to mourn, had fallen away. A 1772 edict, for example, noted that officials were required to return home within three months of receiving approval of their mourning leave. They were not permitted to loiter at their posts, or merely to change residences and not return home. They should, however, be certain to resolve all unfinished business. In 1784, an edict reminded officials not to use the excuse of finishing business to forego mourning completely.[101]

Qianlong's diminishing energy in the face of mounting paperwork

In all the edicts published in the Qianlong reign one sometimes strains to see Qianlong's influence, and one searches for the consistency in mourning policy that is evident in the Kangxi and Yongzheng reigns. Like most people who have looked at Qing documents from the early reigns, I was struck by the sheer number of documents in the archives dating from the Qianlong period. As the bureaucracy grew more complex, the paperwork that kept Yongzheng busy from the predawn hours until evening must have become overwhelming by the Qianlong period.

In fact a close scrutiny of officials' requests for suspension of mourning was something Qianlong had energy for only in the first years of his reign. In 1736, for example, he received a memorial from Li Yinyue 李蔭樾, the regional commander stationed at Zhangzhou 漳州, Fujian, who presented lengthy arguments for why he should be ordered to "observe mourning at his post (*zai ren shouzhi*)."[102] Li argued that his hometown was in Ningxia, which he had left at age eight *sui*. Leaving his post and taking his family (of more than twenty) there

ing leave. Chengde is the capital county of Fengtian, and is a very important position. Within that province there are certainly none who are equal to the job. He requested therefore that Fu Chang be retained at his post. [Another person memorialized on the same case] Imperial response: Officials in mourning having to follow regulations and return to their banners to observe regulations is not something that should be done only when conditions permit. And it should not be the case that because someone is a bannerman he should be viewed differently. But in this case Fengtian is a very important post. All matters of tax revenue pass through his consideration. We should do as the governor suggests. Let him observe mourning at his post. It is not the case that the official on returning to the capital should be separated from his Board. It is more a matter of having to make temporary compromises for an unusual situation. Hereafter this action may not be raised as a precedent." *Da Qing huidian shili*, 138.777–78.

101 *Da Qing huidian shili*, 139.789.

102 An edict of Kangxi 6 ordered that military officials of the regional commander rank and above should leave their posts and observe mourning. *Qingguo xing zhengfa fanlun*, 737–38.

would bankrupt him, and leave the family in a terrible plight. Moreover, the regional commander stationed in Taiwan 台灣, Ma Jizhi 馬冀之 had been allowed to mourn at his post – a position, Li said, that was no more important than his own. Li also proposed that his brother could escort his mother's coffin back to Ningxia. Alternatively, another, older brother could be given the post of assistant brigade commander, so that at least the family would not be left without an official.

This last suggestion particularly galled Qianlong, who scribbled next to it: "What are your brother's merits that I should show him special favor?" Adjacent to Li Yinyue's stock repetition of the parallel conception of society – "The emperor rules all-under-heaven with filial piety" – Qianlong scrawled, "I rule all-under-heaven with filial piety, and yet you boldly request remaining at your post. This is too detestable."[103]

And yet Qianlong would not be able to maintain this diligence, and as his reign progressed he became increasingly eclipsed by the verbiage that his bureaucracy constantly generated. It took incidents akin to what Philip A. Kuhn has called "political crimes" for Qianlong to reenter the system and reassert his position.[104] The next chapter focuses on one such incident, because doing so reveals the fate of the parallel conception of society in the eighteenth century.

103 Memorial of Li Yinyue 李蔭樾, September 7, 1736 (2禮儀硃批4紅2).

104 Kuhn defines a political crime as "a transgression against the values or institutional foundations of the polity, as distinct from ordinary crime such as corruption, which merely eroded its effectiveness. Under 'political crime' [he includes] activity that attacked the legitimacy of the imperial system and challenged the cosmological foundations of its sovereignty." Philip A. Kuhn, "Political Crime and Bureaucratic Monarchy: A Chinese Case of 1768" *Late Imperial China* 8, no. 1 (June 1987): 85.

5

The death of Xiaoxian and the crisis of Qianlong rule

In 1748 Empress Xiaoxian 孝賢 (1711–48), first wife of Qianlong, died of a malarial fever. As part of his effort to give special recognition to this beloved wife, Qianlong ordered that for the first time in more than one hundred years mourning for an empress should be observed by officials throughout the empire. Marriages, listening to music, and all forms of entertainment were specifically prohibited by imperial decree for a period of one hundred days. But left unmentioned was a prohibition that Qianlong would later claim was so basic, he felt no need to put it into writing. He expected that for the hundred days of mourning none of his officials would shave their faces or heads.

As mentioned previously, after the Qing conquest Chinese males who surrendered to their Qing conquerors were forced to shave their faces and most of their scalps, leaving a patch to grow long on the back of their head that would be braided into what Westerners call the queue. After the conquest the order was made mandatory for all Chinese males.[1] There was one instance only in which Chinese were permitted, and indeed required, to refrain from shaving their faces and scalps: when observing mourning.

The practice of leaving the head and face unshaved during mourning has complex roots. As the *Record of Rites* makes clear, those in mourning were to refrain from grooming themselves. Specifically, they were not to wash the face or hair or comb the hair or beard.[2] During the conquest, when Chinese were

1 On the powerful importance of the order to adopt the Manchu hairstyle, see Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 53–59; and Jonathan D. Spence, review of *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768*, by Philip A. Kuhn, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 52, no. 2 (December 1992): 756–63. On the shaving scandal of 1748 as a possible prequel to the queue-clipping scandal of 1768, see Norman Kutcher, "The Death of the Xiaoxian Empress: Bureaucratic Betrayals and the Crises of Eighteenth-Century Chinese Rule," *Journal of Asian Studies* 56, no. 3 (August 1997): 708–25.

2 This rule applied to those observing mourning of the fourth degree and above. *Li ji jinzhu jinyi* 禮記今註今譯 (Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1984), 21.690. The *Li ji* also states that according to Confucius one should not carry this to an extreme. "If there is a wound on the body one bathes; if there is a sore on the head one washes." Ibid., 21.689.

Figure 8. Empress Xiaoxian, wife of the Qianlong emperor. From the compilation by Zhang Caitian, *Qing liechao houfei zhuan'gao* (Luying Huaguan, 1929).

Figure 9. A haircut from an itinerant barber, ca. 1920. From Harry A. Frank, *Wandering in Northern China* (New York and London: Century Co., 1923).

ordered to begin shaving, they interpreted not grooming themselves as going unshaved, and this became standard practice.

The custom of leaving the scalp and face unshaved was particularly significant because it became for Chinese men the *sine qua non* of mourning, in some ways dwarfing many of the traditional rites.[3] To see a man with the bristly hair growing on the top of his head and around his face was to know that he was in mourning. One could wear mourning clothes when performing sacrifices or

3 *Qingbai leichao* 清裨類鈔 (Taiwan: Shangwu Yinshuguan ed.), 64.1.

when receiving guests for condolence visits, and then change into unadorned clothing to carry on daily activities, free of the stigma of mourning. But the bristly hairs remained for all to see.

As previous chapters make clear, the period from late Ming to mid-Qing saw changes in the meaning and definition of the mourning period. Kangxi's mourning for his beloved grandmother was indicative of the changes that had taken place. Though he declared he would mourn her for a three-year period, his declaration was meaningless because in so many ways official business continued without interruption. He had taken the power out of the duration of the mourning period.

The unwillingness of many officials to shave the head while in mourning seems ironical. The Manchus had ordered Chinese men to shave their heads and faces, cutting off the long beards and hair, which elites in particular had prized. The only time they could refrain from shaving was while in mourning. And yet so thoroughly had they accepted the order that after a hundred years they could not tolerate going without shaving. This was partially because of new sensibilities and new fashions; but it was mostly because the image of death accompanied the unshaved scalp. To be in mourning was to carry the stigma of death as a kind of pollution.[4]

This was the context for the scandal that occurred in 1748. After Qianlong declared a China-wide mourning period, word began to reach him that even among the top echelon of his bureaucracy there were officials who dared to shave their heads before the expiration of the hundred days. This scandal resulted in the deaths of three officials, and in the near deaths of several others. But beyond being a scandal, the events of 1748 point to bureaucratic, legal, ritual, and ethnic crises in Qing rule, and were a personal crisis for Qianlong. Understanding the different parts of this case, what made it a scandal, and even what made it a crisis, will bring to light many of the subtle transformations that were taking place in ritual during the eighteenth century.

The crucial actor in the drama was Qianlong, but the ghost of Xiaoxian was present throughout; it was the dynamic of their relationship, and Qianlong's passion to remain faithful to it, that inspired much of the action. That relationship is discussed in the subsequent sections.

4 On the subject of death pollution see Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger; An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger Publishing Co., 1966). See also James L. Watson, "Of Flesh and Bones: The Management of Death Pollution in Cantonese Society," in *Death and the Regeneration of Life*, Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 155–86; and James L. Watson, "Funeral Specialists in Cantonese Society: Pollution, Performance, and Social Hierarchy," in James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 109–34.

Qianlong and Xiaoxian

Born to an eminent Manchu family, the Xiaoxian Empress was the daughter of Lirongboo 李榮保 (d. 1738), and her grandfather was Mišan 米思翰 (1632–75), who had encouraged the Kangxi Emperor to embark on his ambitious campaign to abolish the Three Feudatories.[5] She was from the Fuca 富察 clan, in the Bordered Yellow Banner.[6] At age sixteen she married Qianlong, who was then still a prince and less than one year her senior.[7]

The Xiaoxian Empress's official biography in the *Draft History of the Qing Dynasty* depicts her as frugal, reverential in her treatment of the emperor, and close to her Manchu heritage. While such biographies are really hagiographies, what is significant about the Xiaoxian Empress's is not the extent, but the manner, in which she was praised. She was depicted as paramount in conspicuously Manchu virtues. She was skillful in the uses of grass, wool, and flowers in making ornaments, and avoided rich displays of pearls and jades. During the harvest she would weave the hair of kids and deer into clothes for the emperor to wear. "She used the patterns of her ancestors in designing these. Certainly she did not forget her origins, and the Emperor valued her very highly."[8]

Though the Qianlong Emperor is usually thought of as a refined aesthete, "as a universal patron and connoisseur,"[9] there was evidently a part of him that cherished his native, more rustic Manchu culture. An unofficial source confirms the suggestion made in the *Draft History of the Qing Dynasty* that the emperor's "special affection" for his wife was at least partially grounded in her closeness to Manchu culture: her skill in the arts "deeply added to his respect and love."[10]

It is the emperor himself who made the relationship most clear, in a series of poems he wrote following her death. One poem, titled only with a long preface, focused on her native skills.[11]

5 On the Three Feudatories, see below note 35.

6 *Eminent Chinese*, 581; Liu Guilin, 劉桂林, "Xiaoxian Huanghou zhi si ji sang zang yubo 孝賢皇后之死及喪葬餘波," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 1981.4, 24.

7 Before her death, at thirty-seven *sui*, she gave birth to two sons and two daughters. Her eldest son, Yungliyan 永璉, was born in 1730 but died eight years later. Qianlong, we are told, had secretly designated him heir apparent, and had him so proclaimed after the boy's death. *Eminent Chinese*, 372; Zhang Caitian 張采田, *Qing liechao houfei zhuan'gao* 清列朝后妃傳稿, 1929 2卷 下.4a–b. The second son she bore him (his seventh) died in infancy, as did one of the two daughters. *Qing shi gao*, 清史稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1977), 214.8917, Harold L. Kahn, *Monarchy in the Emperor's Eyes: Image and Reality in the Ch'ien-lung [Qianlong] Reign* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 112.

8 *Qing shi gao*, 214.8916.

9 Kahn, 132.

10 Xiao Heng Xiang Shi Zhu Ren 小橫香室主人, *Qingchao yeshi daguan; (1)Qing gong yiwen*, 清朝野史大觀 (一) 清宮遺聞 (Zhonghua Shuju ed. 1959), 1.54.

11 *Yu zhi shi*, 御製詩, n.p., n.d., 4.1a–b.

We have been reading collections of our ancestors' writings. These relate that Our ancient customs included taking various hairs of animals and making them into jewelry, to take the place of gold thread. At that time people lived beyond the Great Wall. Gold thread was extremely difficult to obtain, so instead, in the autumn they would go outside their frontiers to hunt for the animals whose hairs they used. We told this to the late Empress, who had just been cutting out such materials to make garments as an offering for Us. Now We inspect these things, and how mournful they make Us feel.

Fine silk skirts and silken clothes, I have asked if these are traditional;	練裙繒服曾問古
Earthen walls, coarse-wicked lamps, neither of these forgets the past	土壁葛燈莫忘前
Together with me, of the same heart, her thoughts manifested frugality,	共我同心思示儉
Because of this I have known, I have long wanted to call her "Virtuous."[12]	即茲知要久稱賢
She hooking her silken cord, thus I remember her in her gilded cage,	鉤縚尚憶攀闌獻
weaving and mending in her spare time, with threads of many colors.	縝緻空餘綵線連
How can a moment's grief come from such objects,	何事頓悲成舅物
Their traces fill my eyes with tears?	音塵滿眼淚潸然

The very formalistic language of the preface ("offering" [*xian* 獻] for "gift," "inspect" [*lan* 覽] for "look at") contrasts markedly with the deeply personal tone of the poem, and with the story the preface relates. Shortly after Xiaoxian's death, Qianlong looked at the clothes his wife had made for him. Perhaps he even entered her personal apartments and looked at her possessions, at the jewelry she made for herself. Filled with sadness, he composed a poem in seven-character rhyme. It centered on a very domestic scene he remembered: the empress doing her handiwork, chatting with him about their shared culture.[13]

12 "Xiaoxian" means filial and virtuous.

13 The Qianlong Emperor is credited with having written more than 42,000 poems. This has led one generally reliable source to conclude that he "almost certainly did not" write them all himself. *Eminent Chinese*, 371. Yet if we take into account that he reigned for sixty years, and did leave a collection of juvenilia – if he wrote an average of two poems a day for the sixty years of his reign, that would amount to 43,800 poems, or more than are actually attributed to him. If, however, we are not willing to attribute all of his poems to his own hand, we must nevertheless concede that he wrote at least some of his own poems, and almost certainly he wrote personally the poems translated in this chapter. Their intensely personal tone, the subjects they deal with (including the sexual relations between emperor and empress), contrast markedly with later and much more impersonal poems that, for example, heralded officials or celebrated military victories. We have it, moreover, from an unofficial source that after the empress's death "the emperor was deeply grief stricken" and "personally wrote her funerary elegy (*wanshi* 輓詩)," a duty that was ordinarily performed by someone else. Xiao Heng Xiang Shi Zhu Ren, 1.55.

The first couplet of the poem suggests a tension between what was Manchu, traditional, plain; and what was Chinese, aesthetic, and refined. Beautiful and delicate silk clothes, the emperor wondered – were these really traditional? And how could their softness be compared with the starkness, with the hardness of earthen walls and coarse fibers?[14] The Manchus had come and conquered China with a martial culture and ascetic values. Manchu emperors before Qianlong largely maintained these values; now with Qianlong, who was much less a military general in the field, these values were beginning to change. Confronted with the two ways of being, and wondering which way was superior, he thought ultimately that the empress was "of the same heart-and-mind" with him, and in her way the path to "virtue" lay. And yet she, like him, was ultimately trapped in her "gilded cage." Both were trapped in official duties, and, as will become clear, by rituals that neither satisfied their emotions nor conformed to traditional Manchu practices.

The poem ends with the question, "how can a moment's grief come from such objects . . . ?" That is, how could mere examples of the empress's handiwork become such powerful symbols? The answer is at least partially clear: So much of what the Empress meant to Qianlong was bound up with the ways in which, at this critical juncture of his life, she represented his traditional Manchu culture.[15]

Xiaoxian as Confucian

When it came to matters of Confucian ritual, the empress looked upon her duties as serious ones requiring her close personal supervision. In 1744, construction of an altar to the silkworm (*cantan* 蠶壇) was completed, largely at the empress's instigation.[16] She "led the consorts and palace women personally in

14 This admittedly nontraditional approach to plumbing the mind of Qianlong is called for by the difficulties and complexities of sources that encode his life. Other writers, faced with similar tasks, have had to adapt unusual approaches in dealing with their sources. Thus Harold Kahn, in writing about the Qianlong emperor, concluded that for the Chinese emperor in general, "no ruler in history is more obscured by the mechanics and embellishments of historiography than he." Kahn, 3. Kahn ends up writing about the problem of seeing Qianlong through his sources. Similarly, Jonathan D. Spence, when confronting the life of the Kangxi emperor, chose to write his book entirely in the first person. Jonathan D. Spence, *Emperor of China: Self-Portrait of Kang-hsi* [Kangxi] (New York: Vintage Books, 1975). Jean Lévi, writing about Qinshi Huangdi, first emperor of China, chose to write a meticulously researched historical novel. Jean Lévi, *Le grand empereur et ses automates* (Paris: Editions Albin Michel S. A., 1985). And in the world of pure fiction, the contemporary-modernist Italo Calvino wrote about Kublai Khan through a series of imaginary conversations between the Khan and Marco Polo. Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, William Weaver, trans. (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1974).

15 In most documents, official or otherwise, the empress is presented as a paradigm of virtue. For an account that depicts her as more shrewd see Xu Muxi 許慕羲, *Qinggong lishi yanyi* 清宮歷史演義, 120回 (Wuhan: Guji Shudian, n.d.), 2.27a–30b.

16 *Qing liechao houfei zhuan'gao*, 下.8b, *Qingchao yeshi daguan*, 1.55.

performing the rites. They made offerings of mulberry and presented them to the cocoons, all of them working industriously."[17]

As part of her Confucian duties, in February of 1748 the empress set out with the emperor to serve the empress dowager on her "Eastern Tour (Dongxun 東巡)," and to perform rituals at the Confucian temple in Shandong.[18] The trip was an arduous one, even for a party with the resources of the imperial family. They would be traveling through backwater areas of Shandong, where health conditions were poor. It was an area where there was considerable malaria, and the rainy season was well under way.[19] Then, in the emperor's own words:

> After all the rituals had been completed, suddenly, at Jinan 濟南, the empress caught a chill. It did not improve, over several days, and then for a time she felt slightly better. I was wary of spending too much time giving encouragement to the commoners. I was very worried also about the comfort of the empress dowager. I argued with the empress to return to the capital.[20]

Yet the empress insisted on remaining with the emperor and assisting him in serving the empress dowager. It was raining continuously, and the emperor reported that he was also suffering from a severe rash.[21]

When the entourage reached Dezhou 德州, a county seat in northeastern Shandong, they prepared to continue their return trip by water.[22] Suddenly, soon after they had boarded the boat, the empress died.[23] The emperor lamented:

> She served me with meticulous attention to the rites (*li* 禮), and was utmost in benevolence (*ren* 仁). This everyone in the palace knew well. Now that something like this should happen on a boat, that I should have forever lost my assistant at home (*neizuo* 內佐), how could I bear the pain?[24]

There was irony in the emperor's voice. The empress was well known for her meticulous attention to the rituals, both while serving the emperor and in the

17 *Qingchao yeshi daguan*, 1.55. The altar was evidently not only a place where silk offerings were made; silk was actually produced there. Under the empress's direction, the silk produced was, we are told, of particularly high quality. It was "variegated in color, and yet consistently fresh" and the "queenly gowns were sumptuous." Output was sufficient for the production of sacrificial robes, and "the silk bowls," the pots where the cocoons were soaked apart, "remained consistently filled." Ibid., 1.55.

18 Liu Guilin, 24. *Qing shi gao*, 92.2700.

19 Liu Guilin, 25.

20 *Qingchao tongdian* 清朝通典 (Shangwu Yinshuguan ed., 1935), 62.典2477; *Gaozong Chun Huangdi shilu* 高宗純皇帝實錄, *Qing shilu* 清實錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1986), 310.26b–27a.

21 *Gaozong Shilu*, 310.26b.

22 The straight-line distance between Jinan and Dezhou is 125 kilometers. *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* 中國歷史地圖集 vol 7., 50–51.

23 *Qingchao yeshi daguan*, 1.55 and *Qing liechao houfei zhuan'gao*, 下.5., confirm that the empress actually died aboard the boat, and that the entourage had at this place changed from land to water travel.

24 *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典2477.

precincts of the palace. She had taken on the duties of the altar to the silkworm, and had gone on an arduous journey to Shandong, which the sources suggest she might have avoided.[25] That she should die thus in the service of the *li* was sad and unfair. The *Record of Rites* notes a saying of the ancients: "To die at home, in one's rightful resting place, this is benevolence (*ren* 仁)."[26] Death at home was both one's duty and a sign of one's having lived in accordance with the *li*.[27] Though the empress had been a devoted Confucian, meticulous in observance of the rites and in her goodness, she had died on a boat far from home.[28]

The emperor grieved deeply over the loss of his wife, and took particular care in arranging his mourning observances.[29] For his mourning gown he chose raw silk (*gao su* 縞素) which he wore for a period of twelve days.[30] We may pause to wonder at his choice of materials. Kangxi, whose funeral for Empress

25 *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典2477; *Gaozong shilu*, 310.27a.

26 *Li ji jinzhu jinyi*, 97.

27 Some editions of the emperor's account of his wife's demise contain several additional lines. These go against the flow of the document as a whole, and may have been later additions.

> In former times there were other instances in which emperors and rulers perished (*culuo* 殂落) while outside the capital. In our case, the empress was following me to serve at the feet of the empress dowager. That she should pass away (*xianshi* 仙逝) while performing these services, this is something that gives me some solace.

These lines appear in the *Shilu*, but not in the *Tongdian*. *Gaozong Shilu*, 310.27a–b. They appear also in the *Huidian* account. *Qing huidian shili* 清會典事例, 1899 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju ed., 1991), 481.517. The effect of these lines is to undercut the emperor's apparent despair. Rather than his thinking it unfair that his wife should die while serving the *li*, he is portrayed as happy that she should die in that service.

28 A series of impromptu rituals were put in place, largely to address the misfortune of the empress's having died away from home. As soon as news of Xiaoxian's decease reached the capital, princes, dukes, and Great Officers personally gathered at the Reed Temple (Lu Dian 蘆殿) at Tongzhou 通州, where "the imperial sons made offerings of wine, began their weeping, and commenced the rituals 舉哀行禮." This temple, located twenty-five miles east of Peking, would be the first stopping place for the empress's body. After it had arrived, on the thirteenth of April, relatives from the rank of prince downward, and officials ranked three and above, assembled outside the gates of the temple. In front of them were the imperial sons, who made offerings of three goblets of wine. When this was completed, the bier (*lingjia* 靈駕) was removed from the temple. The imperial sons followed along on the left flank of the bier.

When news reached the capital that the imperial entourage was approaching, officials of grade four and below, wearing their plain court clothes with the red tassels removed, knelt in welcome at Chaoyang 朝陽 gate. On April 14, 1748, the bier was returned to the capital, and those bearing it entered via the Donghua gate. Then it was taken to the Changchun 長春 Palace, where an imperial funeral (*feng'an* 奉安) was held at the central altar. The emperor personally saw to it that the empress was at peace 親臨視安, and then he supervised her transfer into the "camphor palace" (*zigong* 梓宮), or inner coffin. *Qing shi gao*, 92.2701, *Da Qing huidian shili*, 卷482, *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.dian 2477.

29 *Qing shi gao*, 8916.

30 *Qing shi gao*, 8916.

Xiaochengren 孝誠仁 (in 1674) was to be taken as a model, had used plain cotton.[31] The traditional cloth had been hemp.

Qianlong's decision to wear raw silk at first seems easily explicable. Since it was under his wife's direction that silk began to be produced in the palace, it was natural that, as a tribute to her, he wear garments of silk.[32] But a second, deeper reason had to do with sensibilities about death. Hemp, the fabric of choice in the Song and early Ming, was extremely coarse in texture; cotton, an early Qing innovation, was less coarse. But silk was the richest of fabrics, its production the most complex; and though it might appear somewhat coarse in its raw form, that coarseness could not compare with the coarseness of hemp.[33] In his choice of fabric Qianlong was again revealing that strange dilemma he faced between the "coarseness" of his Manchu origins, and the new sensibilities of the eighteenth century. Though he had written, "Earthen walls, coarse-wicked lamps, neither of these forgets the past," he just could not bring himself to an orthodox observance of the funeral rituals.

The imposition of state mourning

As the funeral services for the empress progressed, court officials and the emperor began to discuss the regulations for mourning that would be put in place. The precedent, since the Kangxi Emperor, had been that among officials only those at the capital should observe mourning for an empress. Officials of the Imperial Household Department, mindful of this precedent but mindful also of the Emperor's special affection for his wife, chose to argue that for the first time since the start of the dynasty mourning should be observed throughout the empire. On April 17, 1748, princes and Grand Ministers memorialized saying that they had examined the *Collected Qing Institutions* (*Da Qing huidian* 大清會典) and found that during the reign of Kangxi the Board of Rites, when making funeral arrangements for the Xiaochengren Empress, had sent lateral dispatches directly to provincial officials, telling them to avoid displays of grief and observation of mourning. Qianlong's ministers opined that Kangxi had changed the custom of China-wide mourning for an empress because it was the time of the suppression of the Three Feudatories, and "having mourning observances and displays of grief would be seen by the enemy."[34] That is, it was thought that the leaders of the Three Feudatories might interpret

31 Kangxi's decision to use plain cotton while in mourning began with his funeral for his paternal grandmother, in 1687. *Shier chao shengxun* 十二朝聖訓 (Taibei: Wenhai Chubanshe, 1965), Kangxi 1.22.

32 *Li* still demanded that the cloth be coarse and undyed, and thus raw silk was chosen.

33 For a study of various fabrics, which demonstrates the relative coarseness of various fibers for mourning garments (and includes fabric samples), see Yok Nyuen-ing [Yu Yuanying] 郁元英, *Sangfu caoan jianbian* 喪服草案簡編 (Taibei: Yok Publishing Co., 1984).

34 *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典 2477, *Qing huidian shili*, 482.519.

mourning at the capital as a sign of weakness. In 1673 Kangxi had decided to attempt to recover these massive lands, controlled by powerful overlords, for the empire, and in the following year he went into mourning.[35]

"Originally," Qianlong's ministers related, this restriction on mourning in the provinces was "viewed as temporary, because of the special circumstances of the time. But, people subsequently followed the views of their predecessors, and the practice was never reformed."[36]

In seeking to change what had become the general practice, the advisors who drafted this memorial returned to the classic text *Rituals of Zhou* (*Zhou Li* 周禮). They found that "it states 'for the wife of the ruler one mourns in the second degree.' And the note to that passage explains: 'the Feudal Lords and all officials mourn in the second degree, this means that inner and outer [i.e., capital and provincial] officials are the same.'"[37] Qianlong's advisors also looked to the Ming statutes, and confirmed that China-wide mourning was the norm under the Ming.[38] Thus it was determined that for the first time in more than one hundred years, mourning for the empress would be a China-wide phenomenon.

In May of 1748 a court official provided more support for China-wide mourning for Xiaoxian. He argued that there was no real cosmological basis for distinguishing between emperor and empress in these matters. "An empress," he argued, though "she is only the other part of a pair (*liti* 儷體), is someone who is honored by the system of rituals, and she takes part in sacrifices and holds court. Certainly these are relevant to the rituals."[39]

The emperor concurred in the judgment of this minister, and used this research to draw two conclusions. First, he determined that he would observe a mourning period of one year. Second, because the feudal lords in the ancient ritual texts mourned for one year, government officials in the provinces would mourn as well, for one hundred days.[40]

His own one-year requirement, the emperor decided, would extend to "ascending to the altars, hearing music, and all great court ritual observances

35 The Three Feudatories were headed by Geng Jimao 耿繼茂, Wu Sangui 吳三桂, and Shang Kexi 尚可熹. Shang's empire included Guangdong and parts of Guangxi; Geng's was the province of Fujian; and Wu Sangui's included Yunnan and Guizhou, as well as sections of Hunan and Sichuan.

36 *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典.2477.

37 *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典.2477. In this example of how scholarship was carried on at the capital to determine ritual practices, we see that the emperor was analogized to the *Zhou li*'s ruler, and the court officials were analogized to the feudal lords. The second degree was used because, according to the *Yi li*, a husband mourns a wife in the second degree. *Yi li*, 卷23.

38 They found that according to the *Ming huidian*, the Board of Rites in Zhili sent out messages to the outer areas, then "civil and military officials, and military personnel, wear mourning clothes that are the same as those worn at the capital." *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典2477.

39 *Qing shi gao*, 92.2701.

40 *Qing shi gao*, 92.2701.

(*sidian* 祀典)." Each day, the emperor said, "I shall only hold court, but as to the sound of the gong and drum, and music, these shall be suspended and not done. This will continue until the first month of next year; and at the completion of the period of mourning, all the ritual observances shall be completely as usual."[41]

There was clearly an anachronism in Qianlong's thinking. In response to his grief he wanted his officialdom to mourn his loss. And he wanted time to mourn, time to reflect and observe the rituals, so that things should not be "as usual." He was implicitly against the privatization of mourning for which Kangxi had argued. In effect, he sought the parallel conception of society; yet he himself was part of the line of Qing emperors who had essentially eroded that doctrine. By Qianlong's time it was no longer expected that officials would have the same level of ritual devotion to the state that had been the norm in the Ming. His call for state mourning was thus an anachronism few were prepared to accept.

Qianlong's dissatisfaction with the rituals

As to rituals performed immediately after the empress's death, an edict stated:

> At the beginning all court officials remove their official ornamentation. Then the assembled groups cry. For the next three days they wear special clothing, as in former times. This they remove after twenty-seven days. Three days after the death they perform their duties as usual. During the period of the twenty-seven days, civil officials do not marry or listen to music. Military officials remove their official ornamentation. For seven days they do not marry or perform music. Those military personnel who are currently out on a mission may entirely avoid expressions of grief and mourning. Also, those below the rank of governors and governors-general must also observe these rules, lest they be dismissed from office.[42]

Many of the details of the funeral rituals, because of the change to China-wide mourning, had to be completely replanned. The timing of funeral observances was arranged such that minimal interruption was made in the course of business. Twenty-seven days were used as the mourning period for most rituals practiced at the capital.

Small wonder, then, that Qianlong found the rituals so unsatisfying. Their form was kept, but their meaning was undercut. Business at court was suspended for only one week, and business in the provinces was suspended for

41 *Qing shi gao*, 92.2701. Note that his observation of one-year mourning meant mourning until the start of the new year.

42 *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典2477.

only three days. As a concession to the fact that business should not be as usual, court business was conducted at a different location.[43]

Soon after news of the empress's decease reached the provinces, provincial officials submitted condolence memorials. Nowhere in the classic or subsequent ritual texts are these mentioned, though it is evident that they had emerged as a ritual important in their own right. In general, the extent of one's relationship to the imperial family determined the extent to which one expressed grief. Yet by Qianlong's time only the faintest outlines of this principle remained, as officials sought to bolster their claims to imperial familiarity by writing in increasingly familiar tones. Sinju 新柱, in a memorial dated May 21, 1748, wrote: "On May 18, 1748 I received word via the Board of Punishments that Her Majesty the great Empress had passed away. Your minister fell to his knees and read the edict, wet tears staining his collar."[44] Similarly Yu Minzhong 于敏中 wrote, "When your official heard the news he was overcome, howling with pain and grief."[45]

A sizable material culture had arisen around these condolence memorials. Many remain strikingly beautiful, and as fresh as if they had been recently printed. Some are sumptuously designed, their yellow silk bindings embroidered with intricate dragon designs. Yet there is no order underlying the variations among them. Whether Chinese or Manchu, whether of high rank or low, no such factors influence the appearances or formats of the memorials.[46] Many memorialists went so far as to use red underwrappings in their memorials, even though the color red should be entirely absent from funeral observances.[47]

Since these condolence memorials were meant to take the place of

43 *Qing shi gao*, 92.2701. Officials of the Board of Rites began construction of the empress's tomb. Construction actually began on November 27, 1748. Imperial diviners (*fengshuijia* 風水家) determined that the time was not yet right for the empress to be buried, and the camphor palace was placed in temporary storage (*zhan'an* 暫安) on Jingshan 景山, in sight of the Temple of Virtue (Dedian 德殿) for five months. *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典2477.

44 Memorial of Sinju 新柱, May 9, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14).

45 Memorial of Yu Minzhong 于敏中, April 28, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14). He would later cut short mourning for his father, and fail to report his mother's death.

46 One memorial is delicately printed on embroidered imperial yellow silk, with red underwrappings. Memorial of Yungsing 永興, September, 1750 (2禮儀硃批22). Another is printed on embroidered yellow silk, with no underwrappings. Memorial of Injišan 尹繼善, September 8, 1750 (2禮儀硃批22). Chen Hongmou's memorial is on plain paper; doubtless he considered that for funeral observances this was most in keeping with the rituals.

47 And if one compares these memorials with those submitted after the death of the emperor's eldest son, who died in 1750, one will see also that these differed among themselves in no ordered way. Plain memorials: Memorial of Gao Yu 高鈺, May 8, 1750 (2禮儀硃批20), Memorial of Kerjišan 喀爾吉善, May 21, 1750 (2禮儀硃批20), Memorial of Yonggui 永貴, May 9, 1750 (2禮儀硃批20), Memorial of Xu Yisheng 徐以升, May 27, 1750 (2禮儀硃批20). Fancy memorials: Memorial of Tan Xingyi 譚行義, May 14, 1750 (2禮儀硃批20), is exquisite gold with red underwrappings.

condolence visits (*diao sang* 弔喪), it is evident that many of Yan Yuan's criticisms of the condolence visits of his time (discussed in Chapter 3) were relevant to the death of Xiaoxian. The decline of formalities, the end to a hierarchy among people based on their relationship to the deceased, these were things Yan Yuan noted about the late Ming, and they were evident again.

Many memorialists did request permission to come to the capital to pay condolence calls; most of these were Manchus, who felt that they had a greater claim on the emperor's emotions. One such individual was Jicing 吉慶, who at the time was an official in the Astronomy Bureau.[48] A member of the Gioro 覺羅 clan, Jicing would eventually be promoted to governor-general. He committed suicide in 1802 for his mishandling of an uprising in Guangdong.[49]

After the empress's death Jicing memorialized the throne, asking for the right to pay a condolence visit. "I humbly beg your majesty's grace," he said, "that your slave be permitted to enter the capital, so that he may be able to follow at the end of the company of people who fall prostrate before the Empress's Camphor Palace, to cry in pain and exhaust his grief, as one body to be wearing mourning."[50]

But Jicing also advanced a more complex argument for coming to the capital. When his own parents died (during the Yongzheng reign) he sought and was denied permission to return for their funerals. This he attributed to the stricter guidelines established under the influence of Yongzheng.

> At the time I cried and beseeched but there was no gate opened for me. Now I feel remorse without bounds. The guilt that I already feel I may not easily escape. If I do not now seize this opportunity to hasten home and mourn how can your official's heart be at peace, how can it endure it? Moreover, my official duties are light . . .[51]

Jicing was setting himself up, in the parallel conception, as a "son" of the emperor and empress. Central to his argument is an assumption about the symmetry of funeral rites, at different levels of society: if he was not permitted to mourn his natural parents, he should at least be permitted to mourn his "parent" the empress. The right and obligation to mourn a parent was supposed to be constant in society. And yet emperors in the Qing had tried systematically to change that symmetry, excluding from it officials whom they denied permission to return.

Qianlong, unmoved by Jicing's argument, answered him only with the scribbled "Noted, it's not necessary for you to come." Reading all these memorials evidently strained Qianlong, and he was perturbed by their apparent insincerity. On July 5, 1748, he characterized these requests as "nothing

48 Memorial of Jicing 吉慶, May 2, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14).
49 *Eminent Chinese*, 869.
50 Memorial of Jicing 吉慶, May 2, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14).
51 Memorial of Jicing 吉慶, May 2, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14).

more than following the crowd" in requesting to come to the capital. These requests, he said, "certainly do not come from the heart's sincerity," and, he concluded, "certainly this is not necessary."[52]

He went so far as to establish guidelines for Han and Manchu officials. As to Han officials, "they ought to prepare memorials asking for instructions on the day they hear the news." But they should not get carried away with full-blown language and false utterances of grief: "it is sufficient for them to manifest their sincere feelings. When it comes to things which are unnecessary they should not bother."[53]

In the case of Manchus, however, Qianlong permitted and expected a stronger response than in the case of Han officials. But he emphasized that one's response should be closely tethered to one's geographical location, and to the extent to which one had received imperial favor (*muen* 沐恩). In the case of a Manchu official who had been living in Peking, and who was much favored at court, "it is right that he should immediately cry out in pain (*haotong* 號痛) and hurry to attend (*benfu* 奔赴) in order to manifest grief and fondness."[54] But distant Manchu officials, not well known at court, were not entitled to make such requests.

Qianlong showed the least patience with Manchu officials who wrote their condolence memorials in very florid language, with maudlin displays over the empress's death. These he felt were unbefitting the Manchu people. And they were unbefitting the memory of a woman whose life was so close to that culture.

Arigūn 阿里衮, a Manchu general and scion of an eminent Manchu family that Qianlong had watched decline, wrote a long condolence memorial to the emperor, in languid, flowery prose. Qianlong answered him: "This memorial is really too much. It is not necessary for you to come. What's more, if you come then it will hurt your work in famine relief. G'aobin and others will remain to help you; how could you think it would be so easy to leave your post?"[55]

Much more to Qianlong's likings were terse, unsentimental memorials that expressed practical concern for the family. One such memorial was jointly submitted by several of Qianlong's top Manchu advisors: Necin, G'aobin, and

52 Quoted in Liu Guilin, 26.

53 Quoted in Liu Guilin, 26.

54 Quoted in Liu Guilin, 26.

55 Memorial of Arigūn 阿里衮, June 21, 1748 (2禮儀硃批15). Arigūn was son of Necin, and grandson of Ebilun. *Eminent Chinese* 219–20. Qianlong voices similar frustrations with Turbingga 圖爾炳阿. In response to a long florid memorial, which culminates in a request to come to the capital, Qianlong responds: "This memorial does not get to the essence 不知體, and does not come from your heart." Memorial of Turbingga 圖爾炳阿, July 20, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14). And to Aning, Qianlong responded testily: "It's already too late; now it's not necessary for you to come." Memorial of Aning 安寧, May 6, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14).

Yents'ung 顏琮. To this memorial Qianlong responded: "Noted. This memorial shows understanding. I am naturally trying to restrain my grief and control my emotions, in order to comfort the empress dowager. And when I think of the empress dowager I think of how there will no longer be anyone to substitute for me in her service. This is also a source of pain for me."[56]

Qianlong's personal mourning

In addition to answering all the memorials, and dealing with flood conditions that were ruining the wheat crop and causing widespread hunger in Shandong, Qianlong, still very much pained over the loss of Xiaoxian, performed daily sacrifices before her camphor palace.[57] His devotion was evidence of the emotional trauma he felt at the loss of his wife. "Sleeping or waking," he wrote, "I ask only to be without dreams of her."[58] And in fact on several occasions he reported disturbed dreams about the empress.[59] His devotion to the rituals did nothing to bring him peace. In a poem entitled "Bringing forth a moan of grief," written after his wife's death but reflecting back on the death of his son, he wrote: "I cannot endure mourning by the side of the coffin, entrusting it with all my grief / My child will walk no road, and it [the coffin] shows this all too well."[60] The emperor was frustrated, displeased with the funeral rituals that offered so little consolation in the face of death.[61]

When the hundred days of mourning were nearing their end, Qianlong reflected back on the rituals he had performed. His statement, filled with Buddhist language, evidences the extent to which frustration with Confucian rituals had moved him closer to Buddhism.

56 Memorial of Yents'ung 顏琮, April 27, 1748 (2禮儀硃批14). One official Qianlong permitted to come to the capital was Li Yingwu 李纓武 , a Han bannerman. He was on military duty, and read about the empress's death only through the *Peking Gazette*. He therefore asked to be turned over to the Board of Punishment, for failing to offer to come to the capital. Qianlong answered: "I am ordering Yungcang 永常 to take your post, and you can come to the capital for an audience. As to your wish to be turned over to the Board for adjudication of your guilt, you were at the border on a military mission, why should you be deserving of guilt?" Memorial of Li Yingwu 李纓武 August 24, 1748 (2禮儀硃批15)

57 *Gaozong shilu*, 311.16b–17b. This emphasis on sacrifice was clearly Manchu in origin. See the standard compendium of Manchu rituals, *Manzhou jishen jitian dianli* 滿洲祭神祭天典禮 (Wenhai Chubanshe ed., 1966). The contemporary scholar Deng Ziqin relies on *Qingbai leichao* for his account of Manchu death practices. *Qingbai leichao*, 64.11. See also Ch. de Harlez, *La religion nationale des Tartares Orientaux: Mandchous et Mongols, comparée à la religion des anciens Chinois* (Académie Royale de Belgique, Memoires Couronnes 40, 1887), 48–50.

58 *Yu zhi shi*, 4.5a.

59 *Yu zhi shi*, 3.27b–28a, 5.8a (dated July 10, 1748), 6.13a (dated October 6, 1748).

60 *Yu zhi shi*, 4.5a.

61 One measure of the psychological effect of Xiaoxian's death may also be indicated by the fate of his future marriage to his second wife, who was elevated to the rank of empress in 1750. When the imperial couple went on tour in Shandong, the place where Xiaoxian had died, they bickered so that the empress tonsured her hair and became a nun. *Eminent Chinese* 372.

In the two months since the empress cast off her bodily form 遐棄條經, for the first two months I have obeyed the ancient rituals. . . . I removed my regular clothes and wore plain garments. I paid a visit to every feast, and removed all ornamentation [from my garments] in fulfilling the emotions of husband and wife. I have also adhered strictly to the current regulations of this dynasty. Now that another week has passed I cannot follow along with officials in their one hundred-day prohibitions, and with ritual restrain my grief 以禮抑哀. Removing tassels (*zhuiying* 綴纓) and removing the hair (*chufa* 除髮), these things daily become more distant. Perhaps all grief is joyfulness 蓋切哀悰."[62]

Referring to the empress's death as "casting off her bodily form" instead of the technically proper "passing away " (*beng* 崩), and the statement that finishes the quotation "perhaps all grief is joyfulness," are two strong statements for the emperor's emotional "conversion" to Buddhism. In some sense, he may have turned to it for a deeper solace than Confucianism could provide.[63]

The scandal

Certainly much of the emperor's despair came in part from a series of events that had transpired during the period of mourning for the empress. As already mentioned, it was declared that mourning should be observed by officials throughout the empire. This order included provincial governors-general and governors, and "their subordinate officials."[64] Following the Board of Rites' recommendations, an edict was issued ordering that provincial civil and military officials (except those involved in military actions) observe mourning identical with the mourning observed at the capital. They were to wear orthodox mourning clothes for a period of twenty-seven days. During that time they were neither to marry nor listen to music.[65] After the period of twenty-seven days, the officials were permitted to remove their mourning clothes and resume wearing traditional court clothes, with the red ornamentation removed from them. This was to continue until the hundredth day, when mourning would cease.[66] The edict failed to mention that no official should shave his head during the mourning period.

62 *Yu zhi shi*, 4.10b–11a.

63 Buddhism was, of course, no stranger to the Qing court. Qing emperors had long been attracted to Lamaist Buddhist practices, which they considered closely related to their own culture. But the Buddhism that was surfacing in Qianlong's voice seemed to owe less to Lamaist Buddhism and more to the Buddhism that was popular in China's intellectual centers.

64 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)). See also *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典2477: "Those below the rank of governor and governor-general must also observe mourning, lest they be dismissed from office."

65 *Qingchao tongdian*, 62.典 2477. This prohibition included sexual abstinence as well as the wedding ceremony.

66 Some suggestion is made by the editors of the *Qing shi gao* that many of these recommendations were made by the official Sheng An 盛安, a "dealer in flattery" who devised them only to please the emperor. *Qing shi gao*, 11058.

Many officials did shave before the expiration of the hundred days. The first such case was a First Captain in the Shandong Green Standards, Jiang Xinghan 江興漢. The news that he had shaved bewildered Qianlong, filling him with shock and anger. He ordered Shandong Governor-General Arigūn to have Jiang Xinghan "taken immediately to the capital, so that the Board of Punishments could determine his guilt."[67] Jiang received a sentence of immediate decapitation, and was executed.

The second case to come to light was that of the prefect of Jinzhou 錦州, Hunan. Jin Wenchun 金文醇 had been a Bachelor in the Hanlin Academy, and so was well aware of ritual observances. Moreover, the evidence revealed that a Manchu captain from the same city had reminded all the officials there to refrain from shaving. Qianlong was outraged by his flagrant violation. "The circumstances of Jin Wenchun's guilt being so evil, the case must immediately be decided," he said. And the Board of Punishments, following the "Great Disrespect" 大不敬 substatute, decided on immediate decapitation. But news began to pour in that many had shaved, and so the sentence was changed to death pending review at the autumn assizes. In the end Jin Wenchun was permitted to redeem himself through laboring on a city wall in Zhili.[68]

The most sensational case in official circles was the Jiangnan Director-General of the Conservation of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal, Zhou Xuejian 周學健 (*jinshi* 1723). The case came to light when the Fuzhou 福州 General Sinju 新柱 came to the capital for an audience with Qianlong. During the audience he related that while he was at Huaian 淮安 (near Nanjing), the city where Zhou Xuejian was stationed, he went to pay a call on the director-general, but was told that he was off inspecting a river. Some investigation revealed, however, that Zhou Xuejian's business trip was a pretense to escape discovery: he had shaved himself before the expiration of the hundred days.[69]

At first, Qianlong could not believe that Zhou Xuejian could have shaved.

> By that time I had made of Zhou Xuejian a great official, where his rank and reputation were concerned. Because of this I felt the need to understand the situation deeply and watch over it carefully. Certainly there could not have been this perverse and erroneous thing. Perhaps those who had heard of the matter were uncertain, and they also could not know . . . Now with Aning's memorial coming forward [and confirming Sinju's story] there can be no doubt. It is certainly the case that Zhou Xuejian has lost his heart and is rebellious 喪心悖逆.[70]

67 Liu Guilin, 28.
68 Liu Guilin, 28. *Qing shi gao*, 11057. The sentence of "death pending review at the autumn assizes" was almost never carried out.
69 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
70 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

What was worse, Zhou Xuejian had misled his entire coterie of subordinate officials into shaving their heads. Qianlong wrote, "It is not only he who has dared to violate the laws (*fanfa* 犯法). His subordinate officials at the same time imitated and exceeded the pattern of evil, abandoning regularity and throwing away reason 棄悖蔑理, above and below making up their own customs, how deeply bizarre 深可駭異!"[71]

Following the discovery that he had shaved, Zhou was removed from his post, and the governor of Jiangxi Province, Kaitai 開泰, was ordered to proceed to his house and confiscate his belongings. Among his personal correspondence Kaitai found letters from a subordinate river official, Wu Tongren 吳同仁, that implicated Zhou Xuejian in a bribery agreement.[72] The Manchu official G'aobin 高斌 was ordered to assume Zhou Xuejian's official duties and to assist in the investigation and inquiry into his belongings. In a memorial dated September 16, 1748, he reported finding 9,400 taels in Zhou Xuejian's house, purportedly his treasury for river work, but a suspiciously large sum.[73] The Grand Council recommended a sentence of immediate decapitation. Qianlong, however, out of leniency, permitted Zhou Xuejian to take his own life.[74]

Shortly after hearing of the case of Zhou Xuejian, Qianlong received word that Sailengge 塞楞額, a high Manchu official, had also shaved himself during the period of mourning. This news infuriated Qianlong, who, in an edict dated October 28, 1748, said, "The guilt of Sailengge will not be assuaged for ten thousand years!"[75] His case was reviewed by the Board of Rites, which recommended a sentence of immediate decapitation. Qianlong, however, "because Sailengge had been an esteemed and old official," conferred on him the right to take his own life.[76]

There were many others who shaved their heads, but only a few are mentioned in official sources. Two more violators were Yang Xifu 楊錫紱 and Peng Shukui 彭樹葵, but these two were dealt with leniently, on the theory that they had only followed their superiors in shaving their heads.[77] Both were cut from the ranks, but permitted to remain at their posts; they were also required to perform work on a city wall, to atone for their guilt.[78]

The foregoing is the basic outline of the scandal. It was a crisis in which bureaucratic, legal, racial and other factors complexly intertwined. Each of its

71 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
72 *Qing shi gao*, 11058–59. The bribery case had taken place many years before.
73 Memorial of G'aobin 高斌, September 16, 1748 (2禮儀硃批4).
74 Edict, December 4, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
75 Edict, October 28, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
76 *Qing shi gao*, 11058.
77 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3 上俞 561(1)).
78 Edict, September 17, 1748 (3 上俞 561(1)).

complex elements must be examined to provide a deeper understanding of that crisis, and to expose the ways in which the scandal was an important moment in the Qing.

The shaving scandal as bureaucratic crisis

The scandal was, perhaps most conspicuously, a bureaucratic crisis. Officials daring to shave their heads constituted a serious affront to imperial power and prestige. At the very beginning of the crisis, when Jiang Xinghan shaved his head, Qianlong found it very easy to vent his anger on him and make an example of him. To Qianlong, his punishment was as certain as was his guilt; and he ordered that Jiang be taken immediately to the Board of Punishments. Qianlong's anger left little doubt about the Board's required response: Jiang was sentenced, and immediately decapitated.

Soon thereafter Qianlong received word that Jin Wenchun had also shaved his head within the mourning period. Even more disturbing were the hints that such incidents were not rare. Qianlong's position then became precarious. He had to maintain imperial power and prestige, and this meant that he had to punish those who had dared to violate mourning. Jiang Xinghan's case had already established what the appropriate punishment should be: immediate decapitation. Having punished Jiang Xinghan so severely, Qianlong could not very well exercise leniency toward other violators; at the same time, he could not execute so many of his officials. He had to maintain that shaving the head while in mourning was an atrocious crime, despite the fact that so many had dared to do it.[79] Imperial power and prestige were on the line, and the bureaucracy was watching.

Qianlong's response was simply to eradicate Jiang Xinghan from public record. Subsequent edicts, which debated the relative advantages of different plans for dealing with the crisis, did not mention his name, nor that someone had already been executed for violating mourning. Thus, even while Qianlong openly lamented that because he had treated early violators harshly he could not easily be lenient with later violators, he never mentioned Jiang Xinghan's having been put to death.

With Jiang Xinghan thus disposed of, Qianlong's greatest problem became delimiting the guilty. And to complicate matters, this delimiting process had already begun while increasingly heinous instances of violation were still being uncovered. Qianlong lamented:

> In the beginning [*sic*!] there was the Xizhou Prefect Jin Wenchun, who because a Manchu official had issued a warning to him and he did not follow it, his guilt was judged to be heavy, and he has already been sentenced to decapitation. Who could

79 The nagging question of why they shaved is taken up below.

know that among the ranks of governors and governors-general there would be a Zhou Xuejian, who would make Jin Wenchun seem guiltless [by comparison]? And who could know that among the Manchu officials there would be a Sailengge, who would make Zhou Xuejian seem guiltless?[80]

Qianlong thus had to formulate his criteria for delimiting the guilty, while the parameters of what he himself could consider to be decent conduct were still widening.

One obvious way to exculpate many individuals was common to popular rebellions: those who followed others, particularly their superiors, might be more readily forgiven. And yet Qianlong at first recoiled from this position. To him, forgiving simple peasants who followed a local rebel made a great deal more sense than forgiving officials in his bureaucracy, who were supposed to be well versed in mourning practices. In an early edict on the case he argued that so basic was the requirement, it should have been well known and observed by all officials in the bureaucracy.[81] And in another early edict he held the subordinates of Zhou Xuejian equally guilty for "imitating and exceeding the pattern of evil."[82]

Despite this reluctance, Qianlong realized that this approach was most appropriate, given his predicament. Consequently he sent instructions to all provinces' governors and governors-general, saying that "cases that have not already come to light should not be deeply looked into. The reason is that the numbers of those officials who have followed the crowd is great."

Such logic was used to lessen the punishments of Peng Shukui and Yang Xifu, whom Qianlong claimed had followed Sailengge and shaved their heads. "How," Qianlong asked, "could there be such a diffusion (*man* 漫) [of bad ideas] with no one being aware of it? Uniformly they followed along and played the sycophant. Yet, once Sailengge had cut his hair, how could one fault Peng Shukui and Yang Xifu?" His punishment for the two violators: "Let them be cashiered, and out of mercy be permitted to remain at their posts."[83]

The policy of leniency for officials who followed their superiors was extended to lower-level officials in general. Thus Jin Wenchun, who had already been sentenced to decapitation, had his sentence changed to hard labor on a city wall in Zhili. "Jin Wenchun," Qianlong wrote, "did not pay attention to the Manchu official who warned him. It was not that he was ignorant or rash (*maomei* 冒昧), it was that he lacked heart-and-mind (*wu xin* 無心). Yet his official rank is rather low, and in light of this it is possible to lighten his punishment."[84]

The subtlety of Qianlong's strategy – to lessen the punishment of those who

80 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
81 *Gaozong shilu*, 316.198–99.
82 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
83 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
84 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

had followed superiors – becomes apparent when one realizes the extent to which it was based on a fiction. Yang Xifu memorialized pleading for leniency not because he had followed his superior in shaving, but because he had forgotten himself, and after the twenty-seven days, when it became permissible to remove his mourning clothes, he also shaved his head.[85] Nowhere did he mention shaving himself because Sailengge had done so.

Paralleling Qianlong's decision to lessen penalties for subordinates was the decision to punish severely the few superior officers who might easily be made examples of. To ministers such as Sheng An, who urged a general inquiry into those who shaved, Qianlong responded: "I have not believed in this. Instead I have made Zhou Xuejian's person bear the brunt of the guilt; he is meager in understanding."[86]

Race became another criterion for delimiting the guilty, as Manchus were punished more severely for violating the rule. Thus the only group Qianlong remained interested in prosecuting were high-level Manchu officials who shaved themselves before the expiration of the hundred days. Qianlong ordered that in such cases their names should be "recorded and reported," so that "although they will not be charged with an aggravated offense, still their names will be noted, so that their promotions may be delayed, thereby showing that they have been punished lightly." He concluded: "This is my basic intent."[87]

Among Manchus, Sailengge was punished most severely. But the documentary record stresses that much of Sailengge's guilt originated in his attempt to keep secret his conduct. Thus, whereas Qianlong commended Yang Xifu for coming forward and memorializing, he criticized Sailengge for trying to cover up his wrongdoing: "Sailengge's end was not the same as Yang Xifu's, who of his own accord memorialized. Yang Xifu knew that his guilt was clear, and did not seek to cover it up."[88]

The death of Zhou Xuejian likewise presented a problem of consistency for Qianlong, and so he explained that the decisive factor warranting Zhou's death was corruption. Before the revelation of his misconduct, Qianlong said, his punishment was to be cut from the ranks and sent to Zhili to do repairs on the wall. After the revelations of his misconduct, he was ordered to commit suicide.[89] But the "corruption" Zhou was involved in was relatively minor. Nine

85 Memorial of Yang Xifu 楊錫紱, August 29, 1748 (2禮儀硃批4).

86 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)). At the beginning of the scandal Qianlong sought to uncover all instances of violation. But once the floodgates opened, he preferred not to know.

87 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

88 Edict, October 28, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

89 "As to the bribery case of Zhou Xuejian, the Grand Councilors have determined his guilt, following the precedent of the two men Sailengge and Ošan, and decided a punishment of immediate decapitation. Zhou Xuejian previously because he cut his hair in violation of the rules, has already committed a serious perversity (*zhongpi* 重辟). While in his river conservancy

thousand four hundred taels was not a tremendous sum for a high official, and the case involving "bribery" by Wu Tongren had taken place years in the past. Moreover, taking a profit for recommending an official to succeed oneself was not uncommon.

Sensibility and the unshaved head

Examining the scandal as a bureaucratic crisis reveals the ways in which Qianlong was able to shore up and maintain imperial power and prestige, without executing a large number of his top officials. But to understand the power and significance of the scandal we have to move beyond the documents to issues that they only barely mention. A nagging question is why so many people went ahead and shaved themselves. The answer does not emerge clearly from the documents. Rather, it may be found only in the complex sensibilities of the eighteenth century, and in the special characteristics of Qianlong. We must begin by asking what the unshaved head meant to those who saw it, as well as to those who put aside the razor for the hundred-day period.

Particularly during the eighteenth century, there was a squeamishness about proximity to death and mourning not present in Chinese culture since the late Ming. In this climate the unshaved scalp, worn only by those in mourning, became in some sense synonymous with proximity to death. For this reason it was repugnant. The sentiment has been best expressed by J. J. M. de Groot.

> From the moment life has passed away, the sons and the other male mourners of the highest degree may not have their heads or faces shaved. . . . As a consequence, the black hairs grow up like bristles around the long hairs of the crown which form the cue, giving to a man in mourning a rather unsightly, sometimes a repulsive appearance, which is not improved by the stray black hairs which show themselves on his cheeks and chin. This neglecting of the hair and face extends until the hundredth day.[90]

The shaving requirement imposed such an onus that "many people," de Groot notes, got "shaved immediately after the burial," before abstaining "from the use of the razor for one hundred days."[91]

Qianlong's surprise at the number of officials who shaved themselves before

position, he also committed offenses dealing with bribery and extortion. It is the case that Zhou Xuejian, in his one body committed the crimes of both Sailengge and Ošan. As to the case of part of his guilt being like Sailengge's, I have already, out of my graciousness, decided to be lenient. But his transgressions involving bribery and extortion are much more serious than in the case of Ošan." Edict, December 4, 1748 (3上硃561(1)). Thus he was ordered to take his own life.

90 J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China: Its Ancient Forms, Evolution, History and Present Aspect, Manners, Customs and Social Institutions Connected Therewith* (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1894; Southern Materials Center rep., 1982), II.602–3.

91 de Groot, II.603.

the expiration of mourning did not stem from his detachment from the realities of eighteenth-century sensibilities toward death. He knew that people disliked having to go unshaved, and he knew that this distaste for the unshaved had something to do with proximity to death. But what he profoundly miscalculated was the nature of his ministers' devotion to him. He saw their obligations to mourn his wife as part of their ritual devotion to him, as part of the parallel conception of society. But to them the reimposition of state mourning was more in the nature of decorum. Implicitly, they had no obligation when they were out of the emperor's presence.

Law and the shaving scandal

In the wake of the breakdown of the parallel conception of society, Qianlong had only law to protect his rights as emperor. He looked to law as a way of assuaging his anger over the fact that so many had shaved, when to him it was a violation all should have been aware of.

> How can they assert there is a reason for not observing our dynasty's rules? If they assert that from the start they did not know, then how is it possible that when they saw others had not shaved their heads they did not try to find out why? With their minds at peace they broke the law. This has already swiftly been reconciled by law 此即立行正法, in order to manifest that harming our institutions may not be forgiven.[92]

But law proved an ineffective tool for dealing with the scandal, primarily because there was no law on record, or no administrative rule for that matter, which stated that it was illegal to shave the head during a period of mourning. Qianlong attempted in the face of this to present the ritual as if it had been a law or regulation. "It is this dynasty's settled regulation (*dingzhi* 定制), that when there is a period of state mourning for the period of one hundred days, one refrain from shaving the head. Violators of this provision who on their own (*si* 私) break the ancestral rules (*zuzhi* 祖制) are immediately decapitated."[93] But as Qianlong himself was forced to admit, it was "the case that neither the *Collected Qing Institutions* nor the *Qing Legal Code* were clear on the matter." This was because when the edition of the *Institutions* inherited from the Ming was being revised, the editors simply neglected to include the shaving prohibition. Qianlong's answer to this was: "What our laws (*lifa* 理法) consider necessary need not be recorded in a simple list!"[94]

As tenuous as this argument was, Qianlong advanced an even feebler explanation for the reason that no instructions were issued from the Boards ordering or reminding officials not to shave. "The writings from the Boards (*buwen* 部

92 *Gaozong shilu*, 316.198.
93 *Gaozong shilu*, 316.198.
94 *Gaozong shilu*, 316.198.

文) were also without instructions. Their not having stated [the rule] clearly was also because the rule was known widely by the multitudes 為眾所共知."

Once Qianlong invoked law as an attempt to vindicate his position, it became readily apparent just how poorly law was equipped to deal with such a crisis. To begin with, use of the law reinforced the assumption that each person convicted of the "crime" of shaving during the period of mourning should be treated equally.[95] It was for this reason that Qianlong had said: "Those who have transgressed the law have committed 'aggravated offenses' (*zhongzui* 重罪)." And because these cases had to be so treated, Qianlong added, it would be better for him if such cases simply did not come to light: "Once they have been investigated it is not easy to treat the case lightly and show mercy."[96] Thus Qianlong was pushed back even further to the untenable position of having to keep his punishments consistent, even as the boundaries of the crisis were expanding such that he could not afford to keep them consistent.

A second problem with law was that Qianlong was forced to deal with the question of intent. Some claimed that they were unaware of the imposition of state mourning. Others claimed to be unaware that not shaving applied in the case of state mourning. Many argued that if the law was not written down, then those who violated it should not be held guilty. Yet Qianlong spoke openly of his unwillingness to deal with questions of intent. "That those who follow the law may nonetheless without intent (*wu zhi* 無知) transgress it, this some part of me cannot endure." For this reason, too, he ordered that "each province's governors need not examine into the matter."[97]

Qianlong was forced to accommodate the idea of addressing intent, if he were to succeed in delimiting the guilty. But in the beginning he would consider excusing people because of lack of intent only if they were comparatively minor officials. This decision had the added advantage of not forcing him to exculpate Zhou Xuejian, whom he had decided, at the early stage of the scandal, not to forgive.

> My instructions that it was not necessary to inquire into cohorts referred originally to minor subordinate officials. I was afraid that they would have transgressed the laws without intent, and I cannot endure the guilt spreading to many people. . . . How can these be spoken of in the same way as Zhou Xuejian?[98]

Among his officials, there was considerable disagreement over the use of legal requirements to punish the guilty. In a memorial dated August 19, 1748, Zhang Yunsui 張允隨, member of the Bordered Yellow Banner, governor-

95 As Philip Kuhn noted in the queue clipping case, rules "are a great leveler of status: those who apply and monitor the rules may become as entangled by them as those who are subject to them." *Soulstealers*, 190.

96 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

97 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

98 Edict, September 19, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

general of Yungui, and Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent, argued that bannermen (whether Manchu, Han, or Mongol) should not be treated so easily. "When it comes to bannermen" he argued,

> who have long known that when observing mourning one does not cut the hair for a period of one hundred days, how much more should they have known it for periods of state mourning? How can they be spoken of as having committed "unintentional offenses"? Your minister feels that when it comes to banner personnel, from the ranks of governors and their subordinates on down, where there are those who violated the rules they should be strictly reported. We request that they not be dealt with leniently.[99]

Zhang's memorial is an eloquent plea for the shaving requirement's being treated as a question of ritual obligation, rather than as a legal question. He had made his own inquiries into the rule, and found that "it is a set rule that when there is a time of state mourning no one may shave during the period of the hundred days. Certainly this is an unalterable principle, a principle that amidst the myriad things remains unchanging." And its incompatibility with a legal requirement stemmed from the fact that it was tied not to obligation, but to the natural emotions; it was something which people did willingly, gladly, without having to be told to do it. "This has not been something that people have been forced to do, it just is."[100]

To Zhang, fulfilling the shaving requirement should be part of the instinctual responses owed the deceased. Zhang offered a record of his own responses, as evidence of what the natural emotions should be. "When in the fourth month of this year I received at home the word that the Empress Xiaoxian had passed away, my insides (*wuzhong* 五中) broke down and split, and I was overcome with grief, howling. I immediately made sure to tell the official Turbingga to order his military and civil subordinates beginning May 16, 1748, not to shave their hair, and to change into their rain hats (*yuying* 雨纓), making their clothing entirely drab and plain."[101]

Qianlong agreed with Zhang, and relied on the analogy between officials and their own parents to show how natural it was to leave the hair unshaved during the mourning period. He called for the parallel conception of society.

> It has always been the case that sons and grandsons when performing the filial duties for their parents and grandparents, when it is appropriate to give them food, they give them food, and when it is appropriate to give them clothes they give them clothes. How can they wait for specific instructions before fulfilling filial duties? And who because a law (*lü ling* 律令) is not written down follows an unfilial path to avoid [his responsibilities]?[102]

99 Memorial of Zhang Yunsui 張允隨, August 19, 1748 (2禮儀硃批4).
100 Memorial of Zhang Yunsui 張允隨, August 19, 1748 (2禮儀硃批4).
101 Memorial of Zhang Yunsui 張允隨, August 19, 1748 (2禮儀硃批4).
102 *Gaozong shilu*, 316.16b–17a.

But Zhang Yunsui was not arguing for the parallel conception of society, so much as he was for a more traditional Manchu ideology of loyalty. Pamela Crossley has written that Manchus (and Mongols) "negotiated their relationship to the Qing emperors through the model of slaves and masters . . . the elements of dependency (on the part of the slave) and mercy (on the part of the master) were," she argues, "manifestly as powerful as any that might be drawn from the Confucian traditions of ministerial service to a righteous sovereign."[103] Zhang Yunsui was implicitly arguing that a different standard should apply to bannermen, because those who were under the obligation of slaves should have had clearer understandings of the ritual requirements.

But the reality of the situation was that the legal system had been brought to bear on the crisis. Qianlong's response was to make a shaving provision part of the *Collected Institutions* and the legal code. "Now," he wrote, "I wish to establish clearly the guilt of their violation, and the stupidity of those who in these circumstances violate the law."[104] With this action the transformation became complete. A ritual had become a law.[105]

The shaving scandal as racial crisis

To Qianlong, much of the significance of the shaving scandal related to issues of race: the emperor was concerned about what he perceived to be a decline in Manchu culture. He saw evidence of this decline in the reality that some Manchus held their own traditions in so much contempt that they dared to shave; and he saw it, more externally, in the reality that Han Chinese had dared to shave themselves in violation of the rules Manchu leaders had established. Qianlong was concerned also that bonds between Manchu and Chinese officials were growing too close, threatening the distinctions between the two groups. And he was concerned, perhaps most deeply, about his own separation from his Manchu origins.

To Qianlong, the scandal represented an attack on his authority as a specifically Manchu leader. From his impassioned first edict on the shaving scandal he saw implicit connections between his ancestors' orders that Han Chinese shave their scalps, and the insubordination he now faced.

> This has much to do with how in our times we ordered Han people to shave off their hair (*tifa* 薙髮). For those who did not shave their scalps not a one escaped the

103 Pamela Kyle Crossley, "The Qianlong Retrospect on the Chinese-Martial (Hanjun) Banners," *Late Imperial China* 10, no. 1 (June 1989): 89.

104 *Gaozong shilu*, 316.18a.

105 Those observing mourning in the first degree were to abstain from shaving for one hundred days, in the second degree for two months, and in the fourth for a decade of a month. *Da Qing tong li* 大清通禮, 52.9b.

punishment of decapitation. This past hundred years people have all observed this without waiting for instructions and having to be later enlightened.[106]

To Qianlong, the swift obedience to the shaving rule was evidence of Manchu power, and its observance over the preceding hundred years was evidence of the degree to which the norms of the Manchu conquerors had been absorbed by Chinese: people had followed shaving requirements without having to be told to do so.[107]

But the shaving scandal revealed the crisis which "Manchuness" as a matrix of power faced.[108] When word first reached Qianlong that Zhou Xuejian had shaved himself, he viewed it as an affront to Manchu power. Significantly, he still had not received word that Sailengge, a top-level Manchu official, had also shaved himself. Thus Qianlong's first response was to view the scandal as a Han attack on Manchus, and as a Han affront to Manchu culture. He saw a scandal in which Han officials colluded to deceive him. Sensing the depths of the scandal, he wrote: "This matter has been whispered about for a long time." How is it that "the great officials have heard nor seen nothing of it; and not even one has brought it forward. . . . The outer court and the Nine Chief Ministers are rarely summoned to court. But the Han officials in the Grand Council are often summoned, and I have not heard them memorialize nor have I heard from them in audiences on this matter. They want nothing more than to hoodwink me, and to save themselves from a heavy reprimand." Infuriated, he said: "To think that I could be the victim of deception!"[109]

As Qianlong's language makes clear, he was convinced – perhaps not unjustifiably – that the shaving was a Han violation, and that the cover-up was a Han intrigue. The horizontal and vertical affinities that were sources of personal loyalty among Han officials became in Qianlong's view the means for deception.

> He [Zhou Xuejian] and his cohorts can contradict themselves in memorials. Now I have turned them over to the Board [of Punishments] to determine their guilt. The Board officials are likewise Han Chinese (*Hanren* 漢人), classmates (*tongnian* 同年) and good to each other (*xianghao* 相好). They have dared to cover up for his crimes at the risk of their families and lives. There is also within the censorate censors and supervising censors, who at the same time are selectively hearing rumors 採聽風問. In the past, trifling matters that may not even have been true were repeatedly set forth in memorials. Now with Zhou Xuejian's perversity and falseness I have heard about it

106 *Gaozong shilu*, 316.16b.

107 Kuhn asks, "Can this keen Manchu sensitivity to tonsure violations have died out by 1768?" *Soulstealers*, 56. Evidence drawn from the shaving scandal suggests that in 1748 this sensitivity, at least on the part of Qianlong, was alive and well.

108 As Kuhn notes, Qianlong's "ruling style was an uncomfortable mix of militant ethnicity and cosmopolitan culture. He wanted to make Manchu-ness an integral component of the imperial institution." *Soulstealers*, 60.

109 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

repeatedly [through rumors] but there has been no official documentation to inform me of it.

I understand that they [Han officials] are bound together through teachers (*shisheng* 師生) and cabals (*pengdang* 朋黨). Certainly it knits and glues them tightly together, and certainly it may not be broken. It has resulted in a situation where they cover the faults of each other, they keep silent and do not speak.[110]

The scandal changed fundamentally once Qianlong learned that Sailengge, a top Manchu official, had also shaved. "This is something," Qianlong wrote, "which I find even more terrifying. Sailengge is a great Manchu official, who has been a governor-general for years. Now this kind of maniacal loss of heart 喪心病狂 is not something I could have conceived of."[111] Qianlong assumed that, as a Manchu, Sailengge should have been more aware of the ritual requirements: "Han people try to shirk responsibility by saying they did not know; can great Manchu officials also claim not to have known?"[112]

Once Sailengge's "maniacal loss of heart" became revealed, the scandal could no longer be viewed as an exterior attack on Manchu culture; it became instead an attack from within. Manchus were colluding with Chinese to conceal their own misdoings. "They maintain their position, and are rude and indifferent and know nothing of reverence. In their vast indifference these things are of no consequence to them. Then all our laws and order break down, men's hearts become spoiled and demoralized."[113]

In confronting the bureaucratic elements of the crisis, Qianlong was forced to sort out the guilt of Sailengge, to confront and separate out the various elements of his wrongdoing. In this process Qianlong, because of the magnitude of the scandal, could not use shaving alone as a criterion for punishment. Though this was possible on September 13, 1748, by September 19, less than one week later, it could no longer be. Out of this bureaucratic problem Qianlong came to translate the anger he felt over Sailengge's having shaved into anger over deception. "Sailengge had wanted to cover up what he did. So it can be seen that his end was not the same as Yang Xifu's, who on his own memorialized. Yang Xifu knew that his guilt was clear, and he did not seek to cover it up."[114] And by November 2, Qianlong was concluding about Sailengge: "His basic intent was deception."[115]

110 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)). "Because the court officials have joined in parties to hoodwink me," Qianlong wrote, "I must exert the full extent of my effort to amend the situation, and begin to bring about respect and clarity (*suqing* 肅清). Now let the great Han officials' manners (*fengqi* 風氣) [be reformed]. They will examine themselves and bring forth criticisms, and be able to do so without shame or fear." Ibid.

111 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

112 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

113 Edict, September 13, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

114 Edict, October 17, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

115 Edict, November 2, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

Qianlong's almost legalistic delineation of the guilt of Sailengge couched his deeper anger over the Manchu–Chinese bonding, which was a threat to his power and to his sense of Manchu virtue. This becomes clearest in his treatment of Injišan 尹繼善.

Injišan was a member of Qianlong's top coterie of advisors. A member of an illustrious Manchu family, he was a member of the Bordered Yellow Banner, and was from the Janggiya clan (章佳氏). His ancestors settled in Liaodong, the area from which the Manchus who conquered China came, long before even Nurgaci's arrival there. What greatly concerned Qianlong, however, was his own growing suspicion that Injišan had deviated from his Manchu roots, and had sided with Chinese in the cover-up.[116]

Qianlong believed that Injišan's having achieved office in the Chinese way – by examination – locked him into the Chinese system of horizontal loyalties. Both Zhou Xuejian and Injišan had passed the *jinshi* examination in 1723; this meant that they were *tongnian* 同年 (lit. "same year," classmates), and owed bonds of strict loyalty to each other. Injišan was, moreover, technically Zhou Xuejian's superior. Qianlong felt that Injišan had to have known that Zhou had shaved himself, and by concealing it from Qianlong, this scion of an eminent Manchu family had sided with a Chinese against a Manchu. In his edict of September 8, 1748, Qianlong's language revealed his feelings of resentment toward Injišan.

> The Manchu insistence on bragging when they have acquired office by examination is well known. And they go about shamelessly. Injišan, for example, was responsible for the director-general of the Grand Canal [Zhou Xuejian's position], although he clearly knew he did not memorialize. If it is not the case that he was looking out for a classmate, then it is definitely the case that he had a heart set on deception.[117]

The evidence does seem to implicate Injišan in the cover-up. An edict dated September 19, 1748, suggests that Injišan tried to protect and cover up for Zhou Xuejian, while he tried to mollify Qianlong by offering sacrifices of lower-level officials who had shaved. At first, according to Qianlong's account, when Injišan received the edict ordering him to memorialize on officials who had shaved, he failed to comply. "It was not until Aning's memorial more than ten days later," Qianlong stated, that he submitted his memorial.[118]

116 Qianlong's anxiety over Injišan's assimilation was evident in the queue-clipping scandal of 1768. See *Soulstealers*, 71–72.

117 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).

118 Edict, September 19, 1748 (3上俞561(1)). The published version of the memorial in the *Shilu* downplays Injišan's misdoings. In the passage quoted in the text, the phrase "he still did not respect it and memorialize secretly" is replaced with "he still did not respect it and *quickly* submit a secret memorial." Other examples of this editing are given in subsequent notes. They are most likely testimony to the continuing power of Injišan's family. His son, Cingkui 慶桂, would serve as both grand secretary and grand councilor.

With hollow tones of gravity Injišan submitted a memorial detailing the "crimes" of water conservancy officials who had violated the norms and shaved. "The circumstances are egregious and evil. I have made careful inquiries into their names. I will make further inquiries and memorialize."[119] And yet Qianlong argued that it would be unreasonable to find these officials guilty while finding Zhou Xuejian not guilty. "How can you," he asked Injišan, "not hold the Director-General of the Grand Canal guilty, and yet think it reasonable to treat [subordinate] river officials as guilty?"[120] At first Injišan tried to deny that there had been any wrongdoing. But once Qianlong knew the truth, Injišan accused many different officials – though he still protected his classmate Zhou Xuejian.

Even when Qianlong pondered leniency for Zhou Xuejian, before the full extent of his misdoings became clear, he was quick to point out that Injišan's position on that issue had not influenced him. "With regard to Zhou Xuejian's punishment, it is decidedly not because Injišan wants me to be merciful that I am considering being merciful."[121]

Qianlong's anger with Injišan is partially occluded in published accounts, suggesting the influence of Injišan's family.[122] But in archival accounts the full extent of his anger is revealed. In response to Injišan's attempt to take over control of the case, by himself turning over the accused to the Board of Punishments, Qianlong said, "Injišan has already turned this case over to the Board of Punishments for their strict determination and comment . . . *I* manage these things."[123] The archival record also contains a round criticism of Injišan, which is simply omitted from the published sources.

> I urged him to comply quickly and memorialize, [but his] tardiness (*shangchi* 尚遲) and changing viewpoint (*huiguan* 迴觀) reveal that his heart is not based on respectful compliance (*zhanxin* 瞻心). Who could believe this?[124]

Qianlong's response to Manchu–Chinese collusion was to put greater trust in his Manchu officials. Thus he chose Kaitai 開泰, a trusted Manchu official from the Plain Yellow Banner, to go and inspect Zhou Xuejian's house. "Kaitai," he said, "has first rate credentials, and has been a well-read person who has also been self-reliant." Qianlong went on to praise Kaitai in terms implicitly critical of Han-style horizontal bonding, by saying that he had been

119 Quoted in Edict, September 19, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
120 Edict, September 19, 1748 (3上俞561(1).
121 Edict, September 19, 1748 (3上俞561(1)).
122 This analysis of the deviations between accounts in the *Shangyudang fangben* and the *Qing shilu* was suggested to me by Beatrice S. Bartlett.
123 In the *Shilu* this specific criticism of Injišan is replaced with the more general "I punish those responsible in this case." 321.37a.
124 Edict, September 19, 1748 (3上俞561(1).

upright, never shirking duties nor covering up for others' misdoings.[125] Kaitai, like Injišan, had achieved his degree by examination,[126] and yet in Qianlong's estimation he held fast to Manchu ideas of loyalty. Likewise, Qianlong sent G'aobin 高斌, another trusted Manchu, to assume Zhou Xuejian's duties in river work.[127]

Injišan's memorial of 1736

Injišan and his views on the shaving restriction are important to the 1748 case, especially given the extent to which he became – even more than Zhou Xuejian – a focal point for Qianlong's anger. What were Injišan's beliefs on the matter? Did he believe that shaving the head held any significance? Did he believe that not shaving was simply a courtesy owed the emperor? How did he view it in relation to Manchu culture? Fortunately there is a document from which we may infer many of his beliefs about ritual practice.

In June of 1736, during the first year of the Qianlong reign, Injišan submitted a memorial recommending changes to the system of mourning and funerals. The document essentially suggests that ritual practices throughout China be standardized to conform to Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals*. In its last section, Injišan discussed the issue of the relationship between the traditional Manchu rites and the ritual system embodied in *Family Rituals*.

After arguing that all rituals should be standardized to accord with *Family Rituals*, and criticizing popular practices for not being in accordance with that work, Injišan discussed traditional Manchu practices. He asserted that Manchu rituals conformed in spirit to Chinese rites but needed to be standardized to conform to orthodoxy.

> Manchu customs have from the beginning been pure and simple 自來淳朴. Especially in the case of matters of funerals and burial, they have been much in keeping with the ancient rituals. Although among them there are some that are not the same, they are in their differences insignificant; certainly they do not lose the basis of the rituals 摠不失禮之本. Yet among them there are those [rituals] which suffer from abridgement 過於簡略. Perhaps it would be as well to deliberate and decide upon a regulation (*guizhi* 規制).[128]

Manchu simplicity is presented as a virtue in the memorial, much of which deals with the overly elaborate nature of Chinese funerals. Moreover, it was clear that Injišan was not praising contemporary Chinese practices, which he criticized much more so than Manchu practices. And yet, by speaking so highly of, and recommending the adoption of, traditional Chinese funeral practices,

125 *Gaozong Shilu*, 321.4a–b.
126 He achieved the *jinshi* in 1724.
127 *Gaozong Shilu*, 371.4b–5b.
128 Memorial of Injišan 尹繼善, June 16, 1736 (2禮儀硃批2).

in his mind, Chinese orthodox funerals were superior to traditional Manchu ones.

Moreover, by writing this type of memorial Injišan was connecting himself with a tradition among Confucian literati, who looked at memorials dealing with the rectification of popular culture as part of their obligations as good Confucians.[129] The memorial indicated the extent to which Injišan had become assimilated to Chinese values and the extent to which he had absorbed the role of the Confucian gentleman, down to the last detail of signing his memorial with the salutation "your official" (*chen* 臣) instead of the "your slave" (*nucai* 奴才), which Manchus typically used. If there is a real significance in his choice of salutations, then it is in revealing the ruling ideology to which he was paying service. "Your official" implied the parallel conception, of which the ruler–official relationship was a part. "Your slave" would have implied the traditional master–slave relationship of Manchu culture.

An example Injišan used to demonstrate the overly simplistic nature of Manchu rituals was the absence of the ancestral temple in many clans.

> For example, there is the case of the establishment of the ancestral hall, the place where sacrifices are made to the ancestors. It has first and foremost to do with the clan system (*zongpai* 宗派). Today in Manchu families, among those who know the *li* there are those who carry out the instructions; but the others have never set them up. And these certainly are not making sacrifices [in the proper sense]. The chief of sacrifices (*shenzhu* 神主) must speculate about the correctness of [various] springs (*shuiyuan* 水源) and woody plants (*muben* 木本). This must make it very difficult for him to be at peace with himself.[130]

The ancestral temple was much more a part of the ritual practices of southern China, the area from which Zhu Xi had come. There the body after death was taken to the ancestral temple, rather than being left in the house, as was the practice throughout North China.

The memorial is informative to the extent that it reveals that Injišan, at least in 1736, cared little enough about the traditional Manchu rites. He sought to make Zhu Xi the standard (*zhun* 準).[131]

Qianlong's sorrow

If Injišan had become socialized into the role of the Confucian erudite, with his memorial flowing from that tradition, Qianlong had become socialized into the role of the emperor who looked at the importance of rites from the standpoint

129 See, for example, other memorials of Injišan, *Yongzheng zhupi yuzhi* 雍正硃批諭旨 (Wenhai Chubanshe ed., 1965), Injišan, 65a–66b, as well as by Zhang Boxing 張伯行, *Qin sang bu ke jiu ting shuo* 親喪不可久停說," *Zhengyi tang wenji* 正誼堂文集, 9.12a–b.

130 Memorial of Injišan 尹繼善, June 16, 1736 (2禮儀硃批2).

131 Memorial of Injišan 尹繼善, June 16, 1736 (2禮儀硃批2).

of hierarchy. When it came to rituals, Qianlong's chief intellectual debt was to Yongzheng, to whom rites served the function of reinforcing hierarchy. As a bureaucrat, this bothered him most about the shaving case. Not shaving the head while in mourning was a sign of obedience: in Qianlong's mind the requirement that one not shave had the same purpose as the original shaving requirement: ensuring the loyalty of his subjects.[132]

But when we return to the issues with which this chapter began, Qianlong's intense sorrow over the death of his wife, and the complex relationship of that sorrow to their mutual Manchu heritage, the deeper side of the shaving scandal becomes apparent. The death of his wife left Qianlong deeply distressed, impatient with his officials, and impatient with the Confucian rituals, which had brought him so little solace. And it was the performance of Confucian rituals, the tour to Shandong, that had brought about his wife's death. The cumulative effect of all these emotions was a feeling of Manchu decline, even as he was drawn deeper into the Manchu side, which his wife represented.

Something of Qianlong's increasingly frenetic sense of Manchu decline may be indicated by his treatment of some of the Manchu officials who carried on military operations at the border. In the year of the empress's death, Necin 訥親, a powerful minister who had served as both Grand Secretary and Grand Councilor, was sent to fight the Jinchuan 金川 tribes of western Sichuan. Necin was the grandson of the eminent Ebilun 遏必隆, who was one of the original regents appointed during the reign of Kangxi. His father was Yende 音德, who had been a faithful servant of the Yongzheng Emperor. When Necin and Zhang Guangsi 張廣泗, an official whom Necin was sent to the front to replace, blamed each other for their armies' failures, Qianlong had them both executed. Qianlong chose to order Necin beheaded at the front, with his grandfather Ebilun's sword, which Qianlong had specially delivered to the front for the purpose.[133] Qianlong's action, having Necin beheaded with his grandfather's sword, was obviously meant to carry a message: that Necin had not lived up to his Manchu roots.[134]

Necin was replaced by Fuheng 傅恒, the younger brother of the empress herself, and the tenth son of Lirongboo. Fuheng was able to gain the surrender of the Jinchuan, in a showy settlement that ended up being inconclusive. On

132 In Memorial of Yang Xifu 楊錫紱 (quoting Qianlong), August 29, 1748 (2禮儀硃批4), and Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上俞561(1)), Qianlong accused Zhou Xuejian by arguing that he had, basically, "confused above and below." This revealed his debt to Yongzheng, for whom rites served the purpose of reinforcing hierarchy.

133 *Eminent Chinese*, 220.

134 Qianlong had another reason for being perturbed with Necin. After the death of Xiaoxian, Qianlong had sought to leave vacant the position of empress, at least for some time. Qianlong's mother had sought to have the secondary wife immediately made empress. It was Necin who, before he was sent off to deal with the Jinchuan, tactfully sided with the empress dowager. Memorial of Necin 訥親, September 4, 1748 (2禮儀硃批15).

his return to the capital, Fuheng was given a hero's welcome and a hereditary title; he served as head of Qianlong's Grand Council until his death.[135] There is in all of these military actions the faint ring of decline, of the attempt to use grueling and complex military actions at the frontier to shore up flagging ideas of self-confidence at home, without any deep understanding of whether victory had been achieved. Qianlong sought a resuscitation of the Manchu spirit that his wife represented; he found a temporary answer in her younger brother. A more basic problem for him might have been his own relationship to Manchu culture, as the next section suggests.

Qianlong and Zhou Xuejian

There are subtle hints that Qianlong feared his own drifting away from Manchu culture. They are hidden in his response to the shaving scandal, and in particular in his response to the guilt of Zhou Xuejian. If the year 1748 had meant for Qianlong the loss of his wife, then it had also meant the loss – by betrayal – of Zhou Xuejian. And if the loss of Xiaoxian had left Qianlong feeling empty, the stunning realization of his betrayal had left him not only suspicious of Han culture, but also mindful of the extent to which he himself had been co-opted by that culture.

Zhou Xuejian was in many ways a Han-style success story. In his short career he rocketed to the top of the bureaucracy. He achieved the *jinshi* degree in 1723, ranked sixth in the same exam in which Injišan was twenty-fourth.[136] Because he showed particular literary promise, he was made a Bachelor in the Hanlin Academy, where, in the "Institute of Advanced Study (Shuchangguan 庶常館)," he received intensive literary training.[137] At the end of three years, Bachelors were given special literary examinations. Zhou Xuejian performed with distinction on his examination, and so was "retained at the academy (*liuguan* 留館)" and made a Compiler of the Second Class.[138] Such honors were reserved for the most promising of metropolitan graduates, and it was obvious that Zhou Xuejian was a person of considerable talent.

After five quick promotions, Zhou Xuejian was appointed vice-minister of the Board of Revenue. He specialized in disaster relief, first in Shandong, and then in the upper and lower Yangzi where he assisted governors and governors-general. He was then made acting governor of Fujian, and then was appointed governor-general of Zhemin. It was from this position that he was

135 *Eminent Chinese*, 252. Fuheng would die in 1770, from a disease contracted while he was making a foolhardy attempt to subdue several Burmese chieftains. Ibid.

136 Zhu Baojiong 朱保炯 and Xie Peilin 謝沛霖, *Ming Qing jinshi timing beilu suoyin* 明清進士題名碑錄索引 (Shanghai: Guji Chubanshe, 1980), 614, 2230.

137 *Qing shi gao*, 11058–59.

138 *Qing shi gao*, 11058.

given the prestigious title Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent, and was appointed one of the three directors-general of the Grand Canal. Throughout his meteoric climb, Zhou Xuejian had been personally favored by Qianlong. Even after the empress's death, and after he had shaved his hair, Zhou asked Qianlong to award posthumous honors to his father, Zhou Wanda 周萬達.[139]

Qianlong's language demonstrated the extent to which he felt disappointed, personally, over the behavior of Zhou Xuejian: "He has been bathed in my graces. At the capital I have employed him as a vice-minister, and in the provinces I have employed him as governor and governor-general."[140] But the most conclusive evidence for this disappointment are the tones of dejection in which Qianlong tried to deny that Zhou Xuejian had even possessed any talent in the first place:

> Originally it was not because of his skillful counsel or his capacity to govern, or because he had come out high on the regular rankings [that I favored him]. But it was because at one time it was difficult to obtain people and because he was of regular ability and was a small vessel [i.e., humble, knowing his place]. He avoided shortcuts, and because of this I used him in positions of responsibility . . . who could have guessed that his eyes could not distinguish above from below; and in the end it would come to this?[141]

As angry as Qianlong was with Zhou, he could not bring himself to order him executed. In reflecting on an appropriate punishment, Qianlong reasoned: "We have established just penalties, these he ought to receive. But I remember that he has been one of my great officials. He was patient in sustaining me, but I was not patient in enduring him. Out of leniency then I will avoid ordering him to the execution grounds (*shicao* 市曹)."[142]

Scant documentation survives on the relationship between Qianlong and Zhou Xuejian, and it remains a mystery why a young up-and-coming official, well versed in the ritual requirements, would be vain enough to shave himself before the expiration of the hundred days of mourning. Moreover, what would induce him to ask for the granting of posthumous honors for his father, soon after he had knowingly committed the offense?[143]

139 Memorial of Zhou Xuejian 周學健, June 8, 1748 (2禮儀硃批15). He describes his father as a strict teacher, who was responsible for the education of both Zhou Xuejian and of his brother, Zhou Xueji 周學伋, who achieved the *jinshi* in 1748. His father sat for the exams repeatedly, and at the age of sixty *sui* still had not passed even the lowest level of the examination system. His mother, at the time of his memorial, was eighty-three *sui*.

140 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上諭561(1), *Gaozong Shilu*, 275.

141 Edict, September 8, 1748 (3上諭561(1)).

142 Edict, December 4, 1748 (3上諭561(1)). Zhou Xuejian's brother and Wang Zhan 王棧, another person implicated in the scandal, were sentenced to decapitation pending review at the Autumn Assizes. Ibid.

143 One is tempted to see in Zhou Xuejian an early form of Heshen 合珅, the imperial favorite whose lavish corruption would darken the last years of the Qianlong reign. Perhaps Qianlong's attentions made them overconfident.

There are obvious differences between the two. Zhou Xuejian's bribery was far from

Mourning becomes a courtesy

When classical texts speak of mourning they often refer to it in one of two ways: by the clothes worn by the mourner or by the length of time mourning was observed. This suggests the aspects of mourning that were most critical: its outward aspect (how it dealt with expressing the fact of death to others) and the length of time it was to be observed. Together these worked to modulate the relationship between the mourner and his or her community, and provided a delicate system by which grief could be worked through.

But mourning as it was practiced by Qianlong was far from this. Changes had taken place in Qing reign periods before his own, and he furthered many of those changes during his own reign. His effective period of mourning lasted only one hundred days, and business at court was suspended for only one week. He also dressed differently, wearing clothes that set him apart from society even less than had his predecessors' mourning clothes.

There were aspects peculiar to Qianlong in mourning. For one, he was a Manchu, seeking to commemorate the life and death of a wife whose life represented his Manchu side. In seeking to mourn his wife, Qianlong turned first to the parallel conception of society – which would have allowed all-under-heaven to share his grief. Unfortunately, Han rituals were ineffective in addressing his emotional needs.

Thus, despite Qianlong's innovations, mourning for him remained what his grandfather Kangxi had tried to make it: a purely personal experience. And, as the shaving scandal revealed, those who participated in the rituals were no longer tied to the imperial family by the parallel conception of society. Instead, they were merely following what were to their minds expendable rules of courtesy.

egregious. The bribe had obviously taken place much earlier, since the amount in question was only two thousand taels, much too small a sum to bribe a director-general of the Grand Canal. The facts of the case were that Wu Tongren had bribed Zhou Xuejian to recommend Wu to replace himself, after his promotion. *Qing shi gao*, 11059.

6
Death and Chinese society

The shifts in policy documented in this book together describe the state's disengagement from mourning and filial piety – a system of practice and belief that had (and has) long been supposed to lie at the core of China's values. And yet, as is also shown here, new rulers did not arbitrarily impose changes to the old values. Instead, the policy of disengagement reflected the changing values of China's elites, those for whom service in the imperial bureaucracy was an ever present if seldom realized opportunity. New attitudes made new policies acceptable.

As shown in Chapter 2, the changes began in the Ming dynasty, with shifting elite attitudes toward the function of ritual. In the late Ming, many elites began to argue that rather than guiding or regulating the emotions in accordance with canonical texts, rituals should instead be performed to express emotions. This development meant that rituals could be changed to make them accord with individualistic and even idiosyncratic beliefs about how the dead should be mourned. In this climate, for example, some came to believe that it was natural and therefore permissible, contrary to the mourning canon, to observe formal mourning for a close friend or deeply respected teacher. Although willingness to change rituals had precedence in Chinese history, late Ming innovations were more extensive than any since the Wei and Jin dynasties, about 1,300 years earlier.

A related late Ming change discussed in Chapter 2 was a new attitude toward *duoqing*, the cutting short of the mourning period for a parent. Although instances of *duoqing* were rare in the late Ming, the three cases studied here suggest that many in the state were moving away from a canonically based understanding of how mourning leaves were supposed to operate.

The attitudes of the late Ming were reflected in the policies established by the new Qing regime (discussed in Chapter 3). The Kangxi Emperor's personalized mourning for his grandmother amounted to his public espousal of a privatization of grief. His implementation of "mourning at the post," moreover, showed how easily old and accepted rituals could be changed. This was

not only an assertion of his royal prerogative to alter rituals, it was a change made acceptable because it fit with late Ming attitudes. Though Kangxi claimed to create a revivified Confucian government, he was imposing a culturally Manchu model of rule that by its nature undermined the old Confucian notion of a state governed by what is here referred to as the "parallel conception of society."

The state's effective disengagement from the system of mourning made possible further innovations in mourning practices. Individuals who chose not to serve the state relied on the new freedom to build their own new systems of mourning. These innovators relied more than they realized on the developments in mourning of the late Ming. Although they saw that period as one of decadence, the most daring of Qing scholars, such as Yan Yuan and Mao Qiling, shared the late Ming assumption that mourning rituals should reflect proper emotions, and not shape them.

The Yongzheng period (as shown in Chapter 4) saw the steady flow of Kangxi innovations into bureaucratic policies. New rules made it easier for mourning leaves to be denied to officials at all levels. And when mourning was permitted, a series of Yongzheng-period changes operated to limit its effect on the functioning of the bureaucracy. In response to criticism, Yongzheng defended his need to maintain the practice of having officials "mourn at their post."

In the Qianlong reign policies continued as they had under Yongzheng, except that the new emperor sought to preside over a grandiose revival of Confucianism. He thus took steps to abolish suspension of mourning, but in reality these were mere gestures and things remained unchanged. By this period, in fact, the bureaucracy had grown so complex that Qianlong's ability to institute new mourning policies was sharply limited.

The shaving scandal that erupted during the Qianlong Emperor's mourning for his beloved wife, the Xiaoxian Empress (the focus of Chapter 5) revealed the crises that the eighteenth-century state faced, which together amounted to a crisis in Confucian government. Changes begun in the sixteenth century had culminated in the eighteenth to produce a different relationship between the emperor and his officialdom. The parallel conception of society that had long been the basis of that relationship was neither the genuine nor at times even the putative ideology of rule. And Qianlong's invocation of it, the events of 1748 revealed, was an obvious anachronism.

This new relationship between emperor and officialdom sheds light on the question of "sinification." The old generalization that China sinifies its conquerors is here shown to be far more complex than that. Qing emperors beginning with Kangxi used appeals to the parallel conception of society to create what appeared to be a Confucian government, all the while covertly imposing a more Manchu model of absolute loyalty. This helps suggest a Manchu element to the state building of the Qing.

Finding the internal dynamics within Chinese society, noticing the ways in which "traditional" China was changing, is one agenda of those who study modern China.[1] By tracing attitudes toward mourning and filial piety, this work suggests another of the ways in which China was changing, long before its traumatic nineteenth-century encounter with Western nations.

But studying changing attitudes toward filial piety also reveals some of the reasons that change was hidden from view. To the cursory observer, the system looked traditional and unchanging, the transition from Ming to Qing being merely another moment in the dynastic cycle in which a decadent regime was overturned, and replaced with new rulers who revivified Confucian government.

Restrictions on language – what is in this book called acceptable discourse – kept those in the ruling elite from openly suggesting change to orthodox rituals. China was supposed to be a Confucian state, which meant that it was responsible for encouraging the filial observances of its officials. For bureaucrats to admit that they were doing anything less was tantamount to confessing that their dynasty was undeserving of the Mandate of Heaven. So change, in all but the most intimate discussions, had to go unmentioned.

The other way in which language operated to conceal change was through the words and phrases people chose to describe their new practices. Never fond of neologisms, China's literati were schooled in ancient works that provided the totality of their vocabulary. New practices were thus given old names; "three-year mourning" was observed for a hundred or even twenty-seven days, and euphemism everywhere was the currency. Officials were not told to "suspend mourning," but merely to "observe mourning at their post." In public pronouncements things looked traditional, but in the more intimate genres of bureaucratic documents and "jottings" literature, the change was more apparent.[2]

The emperor was no less bound to the requirements of acceptable discourse than were his officials. But he did have a large number of outlets through which he could channel that discourse, and these afforded him different levels of freedom. Qianlong, for example, could respond to his wife's death dramatically differently in poems, edicts, and rescripts. Because each of these channels was in some way limited by acceptable discourse, gauging what was going on in the emperor's mind is complex indeed, and must involve more than identifying his handwriting. As the one who controlled the editing process, he could shape a final product – a poem, for example – whether he wrote it personally or not.

1 See Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984).

2 To Confucius, these circumstances gave rise to the need for the rectification of names. "When a cornered vessel no longer has any corner, should it be called a cornered vessel? Should it?" *Lun yu xin yi* 論語新譯 in *Si shu duben* 四書讀本 (Taibei: Sanmin Shuju ed., 1966, 1986), 105.

In the complex and changing relationship between emperor and officialdom, we are left wondering where that left "the state." In a volume of essays edited by James Watson and Evelyn Rawski entitled *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*,[3] the central debate that emerges is over the nature of the state's commitment to enforcing uniformity in ritual observances. In James Watson's view, the state sought to enforce "orthopraxy" (correct performance) rather than "orthodoxy" (correct belief). That is, it was concerned not with what people believed about rituals, but with their outward conformity to those rituals. Only by allowing individuals freedom in their hearts and minds, Watson argues, was it possible for the state to overcome the nearly intractable problem of unifying China into a single social system.[4] Evelyn Rawski opposes Watson's view, and holds that the state was indeed concerned with belief. The state, in her view, saw belief and practice as organically linked: through practice, people came to believe.[5]

Most basically, my research contributes to the orthodoxy/orthopraxy debate by unsettling the notion of who constituted "the state." Rather than a monolithic organ that spoke with a consistent voice, the state here is shown to be made up of individuals – be they emperors or officials – with frequently discordant voices. Except in rare instances, policy did not arise from independent action of the emperor; instead it was dependent on the climate of elite opinion, and the sometimes haphazard workings of a complex bureaucracy.

This book also contributes to our understanding of the old tension between law and ritual (*li*). The standard view is that though *li* triumphed, law itself remained influential, but became "Confucianized." That is, it persisted as a kind of fail-safe system to punish those whom *li* could not effectively mold. In this view, legal statutes came to embody Confucian rules – thus, unfilial actions became crimes, and the degrees of mourning came to define degrees of kinship that the legal system could use in defining punishments.[6] This was the view

3 Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1988. The volume is based on a 1985 conference held in Oracle, Arizona. The edited volume includes the contributions of six anthropologists, three historians, and a sociologist. In China, interest in the history of ritual is a recent phenomenon – and is confined largely to ritual in early China. See, for example, Deng Ziqin 鄧子琴, *Zhongguo fengsu shi* 中國風俗史 (Chengdu: Bashu Chubanshe, 1988); Xu Jijun 徐奇軍, *Zhongguo sangzang lisu* 中國喪葬禮俗 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1991).

4 James L. Watson, "The Structure of Chinese Funerary Rites: Elementary Forms, Ritual Sequence, and the Primacy of Performance," in Watson and Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, 10–11.

5 See Rawski, "A Historian's Approach to Chinese Death Ritual," in *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, 26–29.

6 As Vandermeersch notes, the degrees of mourning were intimately tied to the rules of social organization and to the practices of the ancestral cult. It is thus perhaps misleading to think of them as degrees of mourning. Léon Vandermeersch, *Wangdao, ou la voie royale; Recherches sur l'esprit des institutions de la Chine archaique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Ecole Française D'Extrême-Orient, 1977), 1:329.

advanced by Ch'ü T'ung-tsu more than thirty years ago.[7] And the Confucian form of social organization has been credited with creating societies where crime and other forms of misconduct are rarer than in societies governed by law.[8]

This research adds a new perspective to this old issue. First, it looks at the dichotomy between *li* and law in a different way. In a society that was supposed to be governed by filial piety, *li* and its proper observance was always acceptable discourse. But legal matters, which were there for the extremities of human conduct, were less acceptable. Thus, what was *li* was the subject of public pronouncements and the government-sponsored works on filial piety, because these were supposed to be the most exalted of its concerns. But resort to the law was most appropriate for bureaucratic communications.

This book also raises the question of whether, in the demise of the parallel conception of society, the new relationship between official and emperor was guided increasingly by laws and rules. The account of the 1748 scandal thus provides a perfect ending to our story. It shows the Qianlong Emperor, schooled more thoroughly than any Qing emperor before him in Confucian values, longing for the old parallel conception of society in which his officials were bound to him and his wife through the bonds of filial piety. When that system broke down – when it was revealed to him that his officials saw state mourning as an avoidable courtesy only – Qianlong turned first to law to punish the wrongdoers. Qianlong found law an awkward tool because there was no law on the books that prohibited what his officials had done. And so neither law nor *li* provided an effective answer for the crisis.[9]

7 Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, *Law and Society in Traditional China* (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1965).

8 This point of view was first advocated by Teng Ssu-yu. See his introduction to *Family Instructions for the Yen Clan*, by Yen Chih-tui [Yan Zhidui] (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1968).

9 More research might examine directly whether some similar transformation was occurring at the local level. Evidence from those who work in Qing legal studies may in fact suggest that such a development was taking place. Jonathan Ocko and Melissa Macauley have separately noticed vastly increased litigiousness in mid-Qing society. Jonathan K. Ocko, "'I'll take it all the way to Beijing': Capital Appeals in the Qing," *Journal of Asian Studies* 47, no. 2 (May 1988): 291–315; Melissa A. Macauley, "Civil and Uncivil Disputes in Southeast Coastal China, 1723–1820," in Kathryn Bernhardt and Philip C. C. Huang, ed., *Civil Law in Qing and Republican China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 85–121. While the decisive explanation for this litigiousness is not yet available, it is possible and perhaps even likely that it was caused by some kind of breakdown in the Confucian *li*, as if, in the classical formulation, the emperor's failure to govern with filial piety had led to disorder among the people. People turned to law to remedy the failure of the *li*.

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